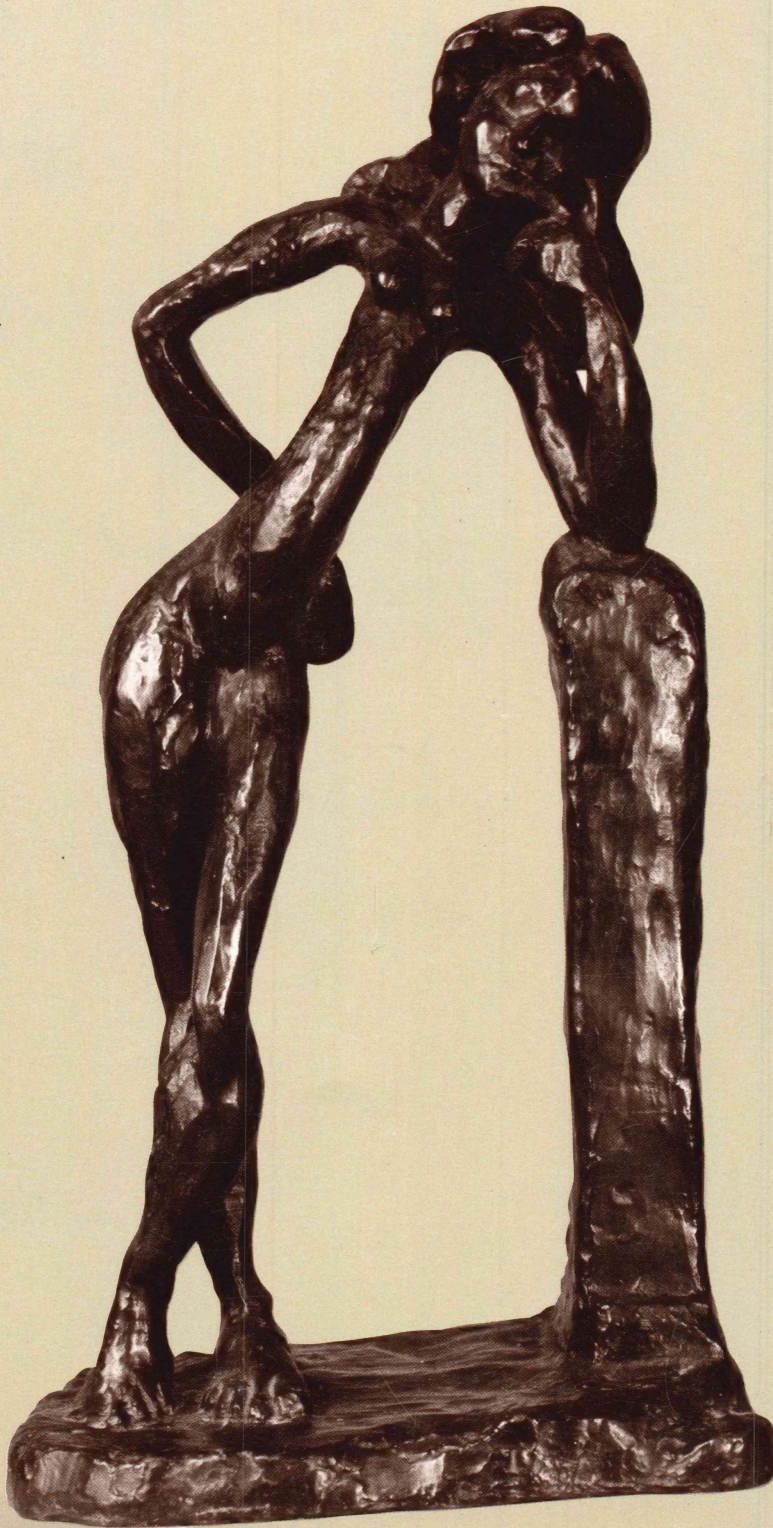


# MUSEUM News

February 1985

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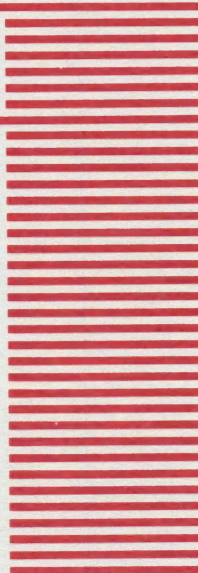
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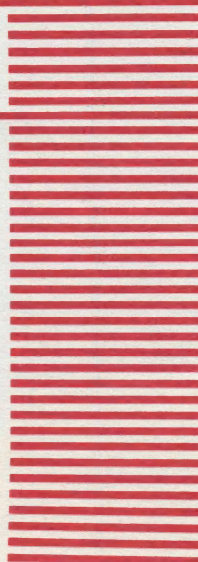
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# MUSEUM News

The Magazine of the American Association of Museums

February 1985

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#### COVER

Women are poised to lead museums. But how quickly are they progressing to the top? See pages 20-41 for articles about where women stand and where they are headed.

The bronze sculpture on the cover is Henri Matisse's *La Serpentine* (1901), from the collection of the Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, Maryland, a gift of a Group of Friends of the museum [BMA 1950.93].

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Those who attended the AAM annual meeting last June will not quickly forget Rep. Sidney R. Yates' excellent speech. The Illinois Democrat, who chairs the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies, gave his audience a glimpse of his knowledge of museums, his concern for their well-being and his vision of what museums could be. Those of us who have observed Yates in committee hearings on the Arts and Humanities Endowments and the Institute of Museum Services know the scope of his understanding and the depth of his caring.

In his own way, Yates gave a convincing testimonial to the effectiveness of museums in encouraging people to learn:

I want to pay tribute to all of you who are here today and to the museums you represent. I do so not only for myself but for all the grandparents of America. Last summer I visited the Grand Teton National Park with my grandchildren, who are 9 and 6. They had grown up frequenting the Field Museum and the Adler Planetarium in Chicago. I looked on in wonder as they identified various plants and animals, and at night under the starry sky, I listened with awe as they pointed out Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Andromeda, the Big Bear and various constellations. And as I watched them I thought how wonderful was the wedding of Chicago's museums and this beautiful national park in fulfilling our learning and enjoyment experience.

All of us in the museum community have worked hard to articulate the fact that museums not only provide programs that serve the public. Their collections, as a whole, are a significant and essential national resource. Again Yates upstaged us when he told us why he agreed:

The national parks were just about the first national conservation areas. After having set aside Yosemite and Yellowstone as national parks, Congress passed legislation establishing the park system, and it's interesting to note how applicable that legislation might be for museums today. It provided for: "the conservation of the scenery and natural and historical objects, the wildlife and for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for future generations."

We are moving more and more toward conservation and preservation, to recognition of the importance of protecting our resources and artifacts for future generations. We are taking care of our parks, our forests, our wilderness areas, our wild and scenic rivers, our historic buildings, our archeological discoveries. We have a National Register of Historic Places and we have legislation protecting landmarks. We still have not taken the steps we should to protect the historic and irreplaceable objects in our museums.

The magnificence of our nation's museum collections is incredible and overwhelming. So many museums have great treasures that must be preserved for future generations. Their loss would be irretrievable.

At the conclusion of Yates' speech the AAM made him an honorary life member. We hope this award will in some small measure be an expression of our appreciation of his leadership and his commitment to America's museums.



# Museum Assessment Program

FINAL

Vol. CXXIV

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS

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The Museum Assessment Program (MAP) is a consulting service providing practical assistance to museums — at no cost and with little paperwork. Participating museums are visited by an experienced museum professional who offers objective and sympathetic advice. The MAP consultant is carefully chosen, from a volunteer network of over 400 museum professionals, to meet the specific needs of each applicant.

Museums also receive a detailed written report by the consultant making observations and recommendations on organization, staff, finance, collections, and public programs.

With information from the on-site visit, the AAM office works with the museum to identify further sources of technical assistance available from museum service organizations.

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Museums completing MAP are eligible for MAP II, a follow-up program providing assistance in the area of collections management.

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3. The summary questionnaire serves as a self-study guide for the museum and aids the AAM staff in recommending consultants sensitive to the applicant's needs.
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5. Following the on-site visit, the con-

sultant submits a written report to the AAM for review.

6. The final report, supplemented by suggestions for technical assistance, is released only to an authorized official of the museum.

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"The value of MAP and the guidance of our consultant will guide us into the future as we attempt to establish a true standard of excellence." Louis Zona, Director, Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio.

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IMS/MAP grants are awarded several times throughout the year and interested museums should contact the AAM for the current deadline.

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## The Eye of the Beholder

CAROLINE K. KECK

**E**ighty years ago if an enlightened art critic had ranted against the prevalence of roto-gravure reproductions of paintings he would have been justified: they were a powerful factor in convincing the public that all great paintings were covered with layers of brown soup. Today we have critics who rant against publishers for printing ultra-glossy illustrations of works of art in which coachwork colors falsify the image of the art depicted—corrupting the eye of the beholder. If indeed the reproductions in the wealth of available art books have popularized a preference for shiny pictures over muted, vivid chroma over monochrome, the change serves as an example of the extremes in fashions of taste possible within the span of a century. It also serves as an example of the power of our tastemakers.

There appears to be, certainly in the press and quite possibly in the upper echelon of museum folk, a current emphasis on the "correct esthetic evaluation" of an artist's work. Who and what determines how a work of art should be perceived? And how much are such judgments based on qualities inherent in the work itself and how much on preference for an appearance, influenced by hands and notions of others?

Artists have occasionally elucidated their creative intent with written or spoken text, but most of them fail to provide us with such guides. Painterly idiosyncrasies, where these existed, have rarely gained wide recognition. All



art, not just painting, has been subjected to evaluation by interpretation. There have been paintings and their painters who found vast favor among other artists but not with the public, and vice versa. In general, it is the tastemakers who have awarded accolades of distinction, with continuum of success dependent on magnitude of impact (who fails to recognize the name of Rembrandt?), vicissitudes of cultural patterns and manipulations of the money market. The physical form a pictorial surface assumes is governed by the hand of its immediate restorer. That form, however, inevitably reflects the concepts of the dealer, art historian, connoisseur or museum person who employs the hand.

The late great Paul Coremans said it was the task of the restorer to see that the dreams of artists survive. Determining the qualities of each artistic intent is a cruelly complicated desideratum. By nature, a work of art is a two-part whole, an extraordinary combination of material and immaterial content—definitely the stuff dreams are made of. The immaterial and material content are inseparable evidence of the intent of the artist, his time and place on earth. No painter can

foretell with any degree of certainty the condition in which his work may exist in the future. Will it be hung on north or south outside walls? in sunlight or shadow? in the dirt and pollution of cities or the comparatively clean atmosphere of the countryside? Will its aging process be accelerated or slowed down by predictable or unpredictable natural and manmade experiences? These are external considerations.

What about the materials selected for the construction? They may or may not have been compatible. Did Cimabue expect the white lead in his Crucifixion mural in the Chiesa del Santo at Assisi to turn black? Did Claude Lorrain anticipate that the passages of ultramarine in some of his idyllic landscapes would develop the blanched acne of ultramarine disease? Did any of the 17th-century Dutch painters who used that pleasing yellow to admix for the rich greens on the leaves of their trees realize that it was a "disappearing yellow" and would someday vanish to let that same foliage stand out in relentless blues?

From the moment an artist completes his work and views it as finished, it begins to change. Some of the change is in the way the work is interpreted. Even from the outset not everyone may see the same qualities or find the same meanings. Which interpretation will accompany the picture the longest, as we know, will depend on an accumulation of historical factors influenced by the loudest and strongest voices. Certain of the changes will be objective, taking place in the chemical/physical properties of the substances within the painting. Less evanescent than the subjective esthetic responses to its surface, these structural changes are not always easily diagnosed nor clearly recognized and understood. Many of them, however, may be pinpointed, identified as subsequent alterations, discernible by

CAROLINE K. KECK is executive director of the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation in Cooperstown, New York. She and her husband Sheldon recently received the Katherine Coffey Award for distinguished accomplishment in the museum profession in honor of their pioneering work in the field of art conservation over the last 50 years.



## COMMENTARY

combined information from 20th-century instrumentation and analytical equipment. In many instances, technical investigations can reveal undeniable factual evidence of alterations.

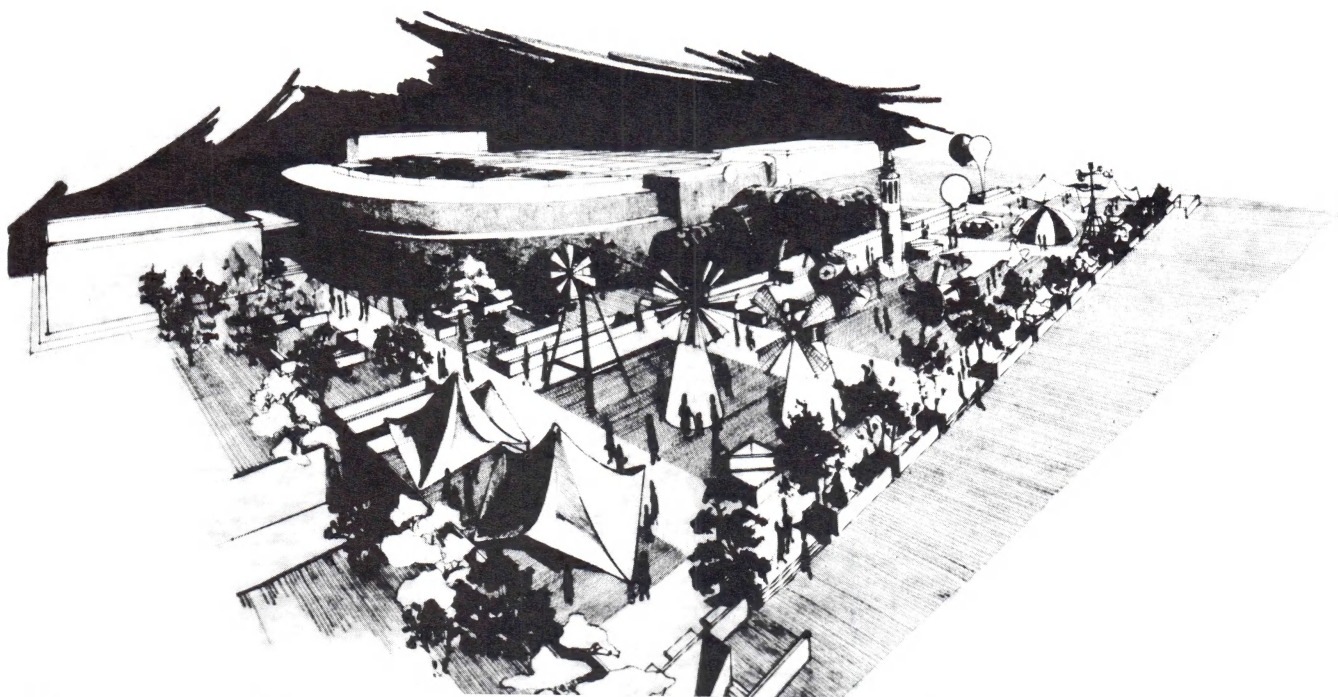
Scientific findings are never and can never be the whole story. Neither can the eye of the beholder hope to evaluate the condition of a painting from visual inspection alone. It is almost impossible to estimate accurately the changes that have occurred in a work of art, the degree to which they may have altered the whole. The sum total of what a painting appears to be at any given point in its history will always require interpretation. That interpretation should never be blindly subjective nor should it be regarded as a winning opinion resulting

from a battle between the so-called "scientists" and the so-called "esthetes."

Most artists want their work to last in a condition reasonably close to what it was when they completed it. Admittedly, there are painters who do not care. Picasso, for one, was not interested in the lasting characteristics of his work. He is known to have used whatever came to hand if its effect at that instant pleased him. On one of his paintings where he combined blue enamel paint with the yellow of a pottery glaze, the glaze leaked through and streaked down the designs in the lower part of the picture with a self-destructive persistence. It is questionable whether the American painter A.P. Ryder had concern for the survival of his mystic scenes, for these also flow down their own faces. Most painters, even before they divorced themselves from manual intimacy with their materials and resorted to the use of commercially available products, were seldom students of the anticipated behavior of substances they chose to combine. In the 19th century, and today, too many artists show a sorry lack of historical knowledge of the development of

painting and have been prejudiced by their ignorance of the chemical and physical properties of the products they employ.

Such ignorance may be excusable in the layman. It is polite to let it be excused among art critics. It is unfortunate when ignorance of the materials they employ becomes a stubborn preference among painters. But ignorance in these matters may not be excused in either restorers or art historians. These two areas of expertise, so long kept separate, must be joint concentrations to produce a well-rounded and illuminating whole. They are the inseparable parts of a service calculated to preserve the dreams of artists as nothing else can. Only the combined findings of the restorer and the art historian can expose and dispel the exaggerations of ignorance and the prejudices ignorance incites. Once these two figures have learned the special language descriptive of each other's areas of particular knowledge, most of their disagreements will evaporate. Far too much time has been wasted in touting the ridiculous "battle" between the good men with



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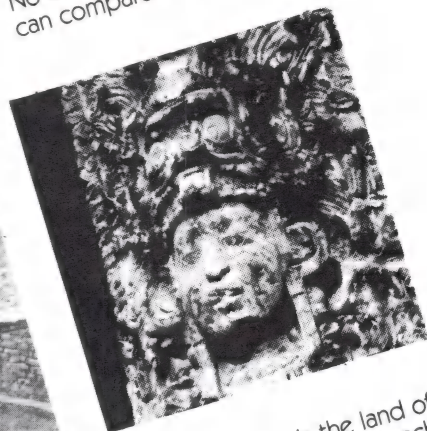
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MN-85



## COMMENTARY

magic eyes and miraculous hands opposing the bad men cloaked in white smocks and armed with scientific lances. Such utter rot has confused the issues and blotted out thinking long enough. The so-called esthete and the so-called scientist belong together: their partnership will be the greatest bonanza preservation of art can ever wish for.

The restorer (the term is used by intent since "conservator" has a less precise context in media lingo and context, not terms, is what concerns us here) who has researched the case history of a painting entrusted to his care, studied its place in the realm of art and in the specific development of its artist, viewed preliminary drawings, contemporary copies, and added this intricate background to his technical findings of

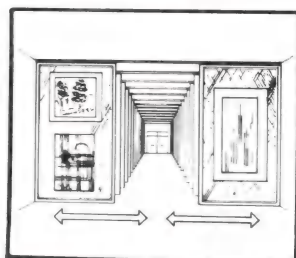
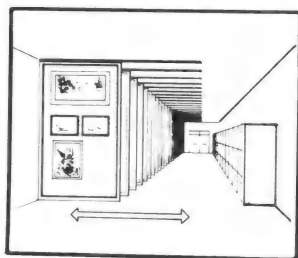
the nature and state of the materials in the structure, will be simpatico to the art historian's questions and puzzles. Likewise, the art historian who has learned to use and profit from the world of the microscope, the registry of X-rays, ultraviolet and infrared imagery, will welcome these fresh insights on his uncertainties. Conscientious deductions made from dovetailing the evidence of the seen and the unseen will produce a body of information to be weighed carefully. The discoverable facts, scientific and historical, will still require interpretation. The merit of this kind of interpretation of the works of artists no longer with us will be in its acknowledgment of the factors of change, its assembling of evidence inherent in the painting and in its known history. Such interpretation will have a unity, and that unity, gained from close examination of the object itself, will have a closer relation to the intent of the artist than to the notions others may have about it. The problem of *how* the painting should look will take the form of a compromise based on suggestions offered from the evidence presented. This compromise,

inevitably, has to be based on the particular use to be made of the painting: is it to be displayed as an example of its part in an artist's development? a part in the history of painting technique? as a decoration? or simply for nondidactic enjoyment?

As long as we employ every aspect of our intelligence to mitigate the arrogance of the superiority and the "rightness" of an individual opinion, so long will we serve as responsible custodians of art. Without doubt the adjusted appearance we select for a painting (or for any work of art in our day) may be changed again with the passage of time. Every era has its own way of seeing the past, not to mention the present. It goes without saying that for scholars, whenever a painting has been thoroughly investigated, careful records should be kept of all text and photographic discoveries. It also goes without saying that the sooner the melodrama of those "cold-blooded scientists" versus "warm-hearted esthetes" is replaced by the partnership of art scholars and restorers, the better chance artists' "dreams" have for survival. ▲

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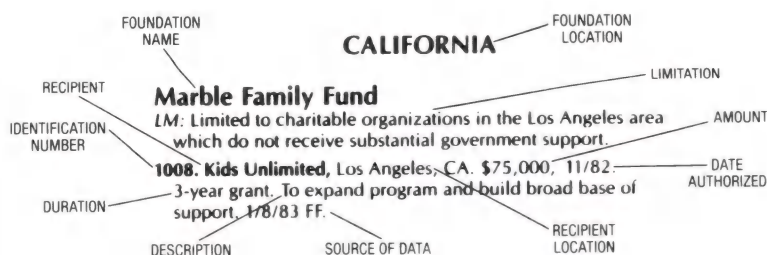
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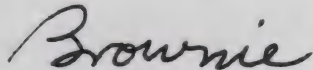
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## The Courier's Art

JOHN BUCHANAN

With the dramatic increase in special exhibitions that has continued unabated since the late 1960s has come an equally dramatic increase in courier traffic, aptly described by a colleague as a "growth industry." As more and more museums use couriers to ensure the safe and secure transport of works of art, the job has become an important part of present-day museum operations. It is time, therefore, to establish guidelines regulating the appointment of couriers, define their responsibilities, and delineate the responsibilities of lenders and borrowers in the context of courier service.

*Courier Appointments.* The first questions that must be settled are, who should appoint couriers and who should be appointed? The answer to the first question is obvious: Only a director can appoint a courier. A director who does not control such important decisions risks loss of control spreading to other areas of the museum. A useful administrative device is the requirement that anyone planning to travel as a courier must obtain from the director written permission to do so. A simple, one-page form, stating the destination, reason for travelling and anticipated expenses, could be used.

The answer to the second question is also obvious to experienced museum workers, but requires some discussion for others. Several years ago at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, when travel in connection with special exhibitions

and loans became common, we established a firm rule: curators, conservators and registrars — no others — are eligible to be couriers. This rule has been strictly followed; in general the same principle applies in other museums. There is a good reason for it: the people who serve as couriers should be the same people who work with objects. Curators, conservators and registrars work with objects day in and day out, know what they are made of, how to pick them up, move them, their strengths and weaknesses, the effect that climate and its rapid fluctuations can have upon them. Registrars, as specialists in the movement of art, are also prepared to cope with the fast pace and increased complexity of transportation problems. With rare exceptions, other museum workers have neither the background nor the experience to meet these qualifications. The eligibility rule should be firm and strictly enforced.

There are a few newcomers to the field who maintain that security personnel should act as couriers and control the movement of art, including security in transit. Thirteen years of experience in moving art on four continents, however, has led me to the inescapable conclusion that the role of security personnel should be limited to support service when requested by registrars. Security personnel are not attuned to the primary dangers to art in transit\* — bad handling and poor packing — with the runners-up exposure to

the elements and rapid fluctuation in temperature and humidity.

Leading American fine arts insurance brokers agree that the most common danger is bad handling, especially at airports. A major source at Lloyds of London told me, "The vast majority of transit losses occur because of bad handling and packing problems." Conditions could change, of course, and museums must be on guard against other perils and take all necessary precautions, including support service by museum security departments and police agencies. But to judge by the record of the past decade and longer, art is mainly in danger from random and premeditated acts inside museums. Trustees and directors should instruct their security managers to concentrate on the temples, not the highways and airways.

*Courier Qualifications.* Among eligible personnel a museum should identify those who possess the qualities that mark a good courier. Sound judgment and tact are primary. Peter Cannon-Brookes says "unlimited patience" is required during long hours in cargo warehouses, on loading docks and in museum galleries. Firmness is often necessary, especially when an agent, carrier or a borrower makes what appears to be a reasonable request that in reality does not conform to prudent practice. Firmness, then, often means saying no, politely but clearly, perhaps with "unlimited patience." A courier must exhibit cool behavior in a crisis and, linked to this, possess the ability to make decisions, sometimes quickly, far from home and without the benefit of consultation. Physical stamina must carry a courier at least 24 hours without sleep. This requires neither the physique of a football player nor the ability

\*I am pleased to be able to exempt from this statement my friends and colleagues in the Metropolitan Museum's Security Department, who offer support without strings in a thoroughly professional manner.

JOHN BUCHANAN is registrar at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. This article is adapted from a talk given at the 1984 AAM annual meeting in Washington, D.C.



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to go two sets with Martina Navratilova. Never confuse, as some do, stamina with size and strength.

I feel little need to dwell on couriers who are eligible but not well qualified to do the job. Over the years I have been on the whole impressed by the caliber of people museums have chosen as couriers. Although we all treasure examples of walking disasters and unguided missiles, examples of poor couriers and stories about them tend to obscure reality: the overwhelming majority of couriers are well qualified to do the job and do it well.

*Responsibilities of Lenders.* Do not require a courier when the object does not require a courier. Honest people can differ on this question, and the final decision is the lender's, but many loans are routine and itineraries simple and do not require the added expense of

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couriers. Value is not the sole guideline. Some objects of relatively low value are either fragile or difficult to transport, and in such cases couriers are necessary. It should always be borne in mind that an object important enough to rate a courier is important enough for the courier to be present during unpacking.

Appoint a qualified courier. Borrowers rightly resent paying the expense of an unqualified courier, and such appointments are unprofessional.

Impress upon the courier that he or she is travelling only because a courier is required to accompany the object and to be present for unpacking. This is best done by establishing it as a routine policy of the museum, so that couriers know and accept the sole reason for such travel.

Do not demand unreasonable expenses of the borrower or allow a courier to incur such expenses. One example involves airline reservations. The usual international standard is first class when an object is hand-carried, economy class at all other times. Recently, however, a few museums, including at least one American museum, have insisted on business class tickets when shipments are in the cargo hold or when couriers are not engaged in escort duty. This is an unreasonable condition of loan. The only hope of stopping it is concerted action by museum directors.

*Responsibilities of the Borrower.* Always be sensitive to the authority of the courier. As Peter Cannon-Brookes writes,

... the fundamental principle which must be constantly borne in mind is that the ... courier is the representative of the owner and the authority delegated to him, until such time as the control of the loan is formally handed over to the exhibition organizer, is absolute.

Until the object is unpacked, the courier satisfied that security is adequate and receipts signed, the courier is in charge — not the receiving registrar, not the exhibition curator, not the head of security.

It is the borrower's responsibility to meet the shipment: this cannot be emphasized enough. A representative from the registrar's office must be at the airport when the shipment arrives. Museums that turn over this part of the operation to security departments risk poor handling at the airport and excessive highway speed. The borrower's representative must get to the airport on

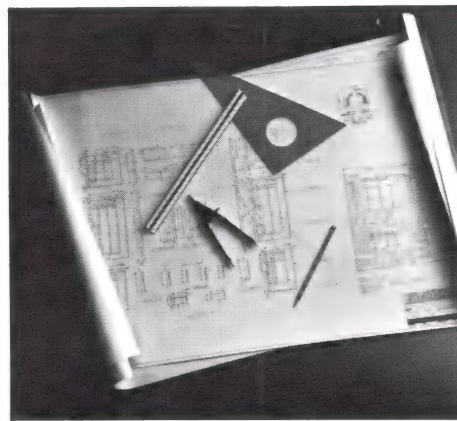
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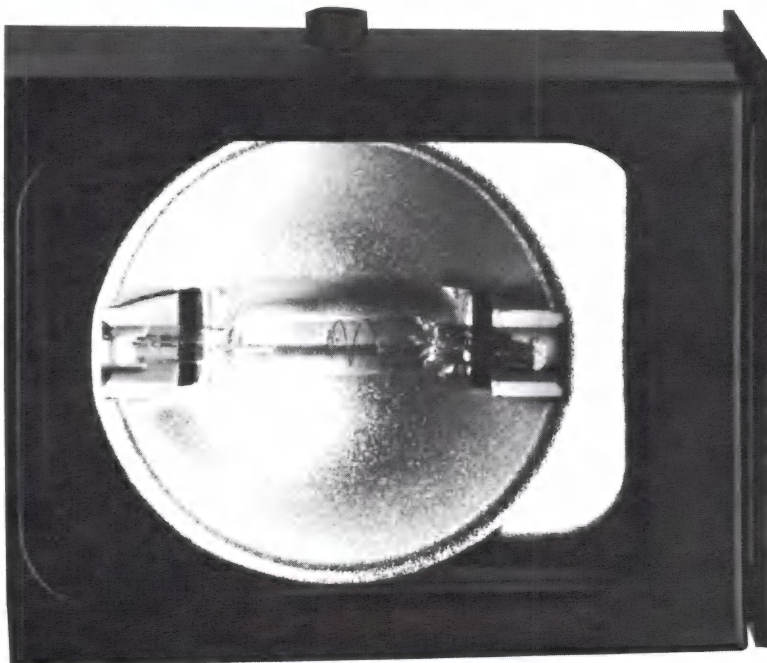
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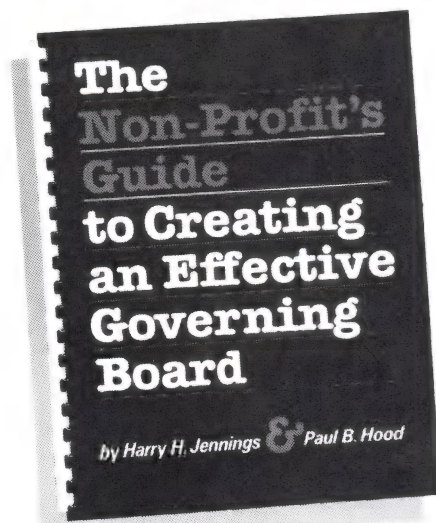
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time. Failure to meet a courier goes beyond discourtesy, for if it is a passenger flight and the courier is not allowed planeside, which is often the case, the shipment could be placed in jeopardy if there is no museum supervision during unloading and movement.

If a loan is arriving by long-distance van, the security department should be alerted and prepared to admit either the van or its contents into the museum, whatever the hour. The registrar should be present to receive the shipment and, if necessary, arrange transportation for the courier to a hotel.

Unpacking should not be rushed in order to get rid of the courier as quickly as possible to keep down expenses. This leads to a subject that should not have to be discussed. The borrower must provide the courier with a first-class hotel room and a per diem that allows for safe, reliable ground transportation and meals in decent restaurants. Too many museums here and abroad "go on the cheap": sleazy hotels, rooms without baths, per diems that will pay for what passes as food at greasy spoons. Museums that choose to join or continue in the special exhibition circuit should budget adequately for the expenses necessary to put on an exhibition.

The final duty of the borrower to the courier is to treat him as well when he arrives after the exhibition as when he delivers the loan. We must all guard against the tendency to relax after the show is over.

*Courier Responsibilities.* Couriers should receive guidelines, not detailed instructions that attempt to cover every possible circumstance. Anyone who needs page after page of instructions is not qualified to be a courier. Excessive detail creates nervous couriers, who are a menace, or couriers who ignore all instructions.

A courier should never disclose the mission with anyone outside the museum or with colleagues and common carrier personnel who do not need to know.

A courier should read the condition report, examine the object, discuss the



object with colleagues if necessary and observe the packing.

A courier must travel alone, never with family and friends. If a vacation is planned, others should travel on separate aircraft and join the courier after the job is finished.

Registrars usually supervise the loading of vans at the beginning of a journey. When a loan is being returned, however, the courier must supervise at the lender's premises and at the airport.

The most critical point of most journeys is at the airport. On an outbound trip, registrars usually supervise the placement of crates onto pallets or into containers and their movement onto aircraft. No matter who supervises, the job is much simpler if the shipment goes by all-cargo aircraft. But most cities, including some large ones, do not have all-cargo service, and there are many airports where it is either difficult or impossible for a courier to gain access to planeside to witness the loading of cargo onto a passenger plane. Even if a museum has no registrar and only a handful of employees, it is folly to send a courier alone to any good-sized airport

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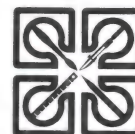
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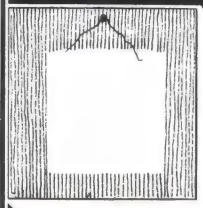


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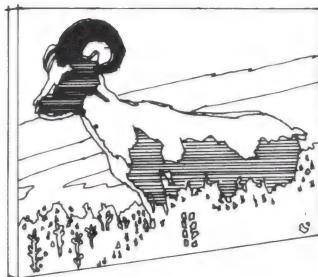
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## TECHNIQUES

and expect that person to do everything — check in, get a seat assignment, check luggage — and always keep the crate in sight. There must be a second person who stays with the shipment when the courier cannot be with it, sees it onto the aircraft, gets word to the courier that it is aboard and the cargo hatch closed, makes sure the courier is on the plane, and stands by to confirm two things: that prior to takeoff the shipment is not unloaded and that the plane indeed takes off. Cargo, including art, can be unloaded because last-minute reports of strong headwinds make it necessary to lighten a plane; and planes can have mechanical failures before leaving the gates or while taxiing.

Sometimes there is a break in the journey, either a brief stopover or an actual change of planes. Whether this occurs at home or abroad, an agent should be hired to be on the ground, meet the courier and make sure that nothing goes wrong, such as inadvertent unloading of the cargo.

All of this support can be relatively expensive, depending upon the situation, but it would be a lot more expensive, and not just in dollars, if something happened to a shipment. Museums must spend what is necessary to protect museum objects in transit.

At the arrival point, the courier should supervise unloading of the aircraft (if possible), the removal of crates from pallets or containers, convoy speed to the borrower's premises, and loading and unloading of vans.

When the job is finished, the courier should submit a written report to the registrar.

*Long-Distance Ground Transportation.* The registrar controls such movements, with support service given by museum security departments and police agencies as required. There are standard procedures to be followed, which can be supplemented by special arrangements on a case by case basis.

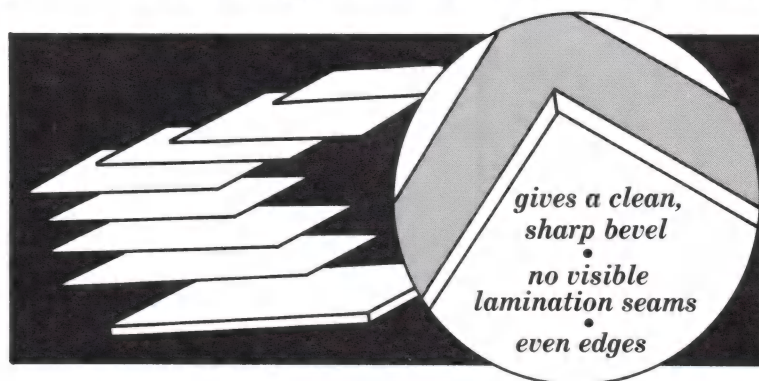
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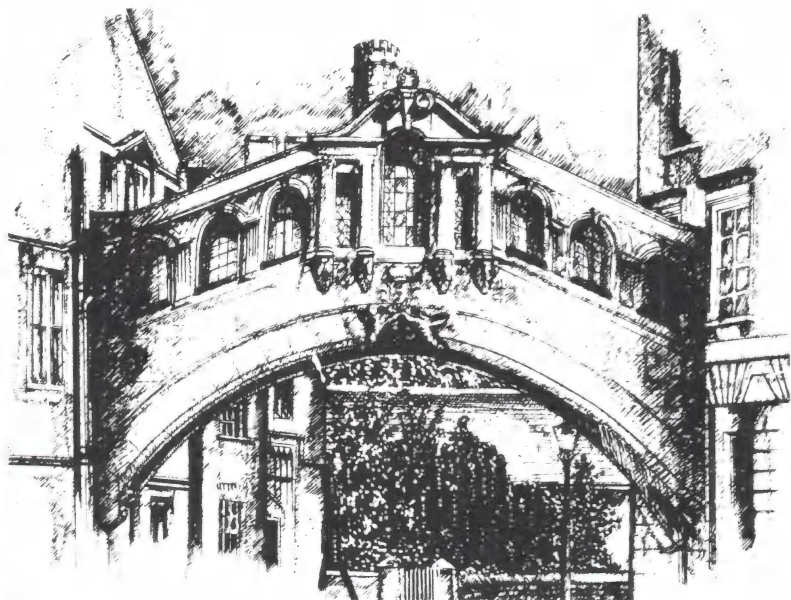
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## TECHNIQUES

sleeping; or a secure compound — another museum's garage, if it can be arranged. Vans are never left unguarded.

10. If the route goes for long distances through sparsely inhabited country and the shipment is especially sensitive, consider including an empty van in the convoy. If you break down at 3 A.M. in West Texas halfway between San Antonio and El Paso, but you can change cabs and roll in fifteen minutes, you'll smile in the darkness and congratulate yourself on your foresight. And if you don't need it and the folks back home criticize the cost of a van never used, just remember what Louis Armstrong said to the jazz critic: If you've gotta have it explained, you'll never dig it. Δ

### Acknowledgments

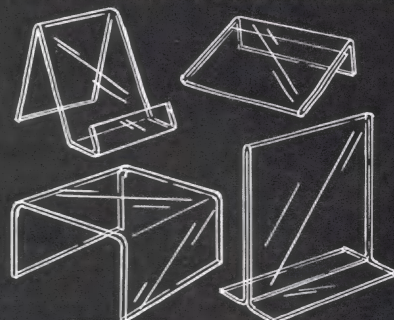
For many invaluable suggestions and procedures established over the years, the author is indebted to his colleagues at the Metropolitan Museum of Art: Herbert Moskowitz, senior associate registrar, and Laura Rutledge Grimes, associate registrar.

### Further Reading

A serious and valuable contribution to the literature on courier practices is Peter Cannon-Brookes' "A Draft Code of Practice for Escorts and Couriers," *The International Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship*, 1:1 (March 1982), p. 47.

Chapter 8 of *Museum Registration Methods*, by Dorothy H. Dudley, Irma Bezold Wilkinson, et al (Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums, 1979) describes the responsibilities of couriers.

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

Volume 63, Number 3  
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There have been some remarkable women in the annals of American museum history. Juliana Force helped Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney found the Whitney Museum of American Art and was its first director. Katherine Coffey was director of the Newark Museum and taught future museum leaders in the training program there. One of Coffey's students, Dorothy Dudley, devised a system for the registration of museum objects now used around the world. Anna Billings Gallup was the guiding force behind the foundation of the Brooklyn Children's Museum. Agnes Mongan, who was director of Harvard's Fogg Art Museum and is now its curator emeritus of drawings, was one of several women who studied in Paul Sachs' famous museum course.

The list could go on. Behind the scenes, one suspects, there were even more remarkable women. In the vernacular of earlier days, though, a museum professional was a "museum man." On the visible cutting edge there were few women, just as there were few prominent women in most professions until the last 15 years or so.

If an observation I made at a recent AAM gathering is a clue, things are slow to change in museums. As I looked around the room, I was somewhat startled to discover that only four of the 30 people present were wearing skirts. The fact that a room full of museum directors is a veritable sea of trousers should have come as no surprise, but the occasion happened to offer a particularly graphic illustration of the absence of women in the upper echelons of museum work.

Consider these facts, all acquired by methods that have greater statistical validity than counting skirts and trousers at cocktail parties:

- Only seven women are members of the Association of Art Museum Directors, which represents the nation's 130 largest art museums. The AAMD's 1984 salary survey, unlike other reports of that nature, does not report the relative median earnings of men and women.
- A recently published study conducted by the American Association for State and Local History says that the mean salary for a man in historical museums and agencies is \$26,458; for a woman it is \$19,103.
- More than 80 percent of all science-technology center directors are men, according to a 1982 survey by the Association of Science-Technology Centers. The median salary for men was nearly \$9,950 higher than that of women.

The attitudinal barriers that traditionally have impeded the progress of women's careers—in museums and

elsewhere—are disappearing. But how rapidly are women emerging as leaders of museums? The optimistic view has them already well on their way. The cautious view has them still coming up against the stereotypical belief that a museum is better off with a man at the helm.

This issue of MUSEUM NEWS focuses on women as museum leaders. We had two goals: to describe the status and the potential of women in the profession, and to salute some interesting women who are making a difference. We didn't think it was unusual to devote space to the subject, given the large number of women who work in museums and given the fact that in 1985, writing about women's issues is commonplace. But despite the statistics (both scientifically and casually collected) that show the underrepresentation of women in the upper levels of museum administration and the disparity between men's and women's salaries, we encountered a certain reticence about the barriers women face. Those who have succeeded would just as soon forget about the roadblocks, and those who haven't don't want to jeopardize their chances.

In this issue, Kendall Taylor ponders the state of women in museums today and speculates about what the future will bring. Tracey Linton Craig's profiles let 10 women speak for themselves about their careers and their aspirations. Patricia Ullberg and Joanna Woś emphasize the need for sound career planning if women are to move into upper-level administrative positions. And anecdotes drawn from an interview with one remarkable museum woman, Grace McCann Morley, provide a glimpse at the career of a pioneering museum leader.

To paraphrase a popular T-shirt slogan, the best museum man for the job is often a woman. For every search committee today that is reluctant to consider women candidates for a director's position, there are trustees who look to a pool of talent that includes women as well as men. For every director who hires men for jobs with titles that begin with "deputy" but would call a woman with the same responsibilities an "assistant to . . .," there are those who encourage and inspire women professionals.

As Kendall Taylor points out, "within this century the male-dominated leadership of America's museums will become a phenomenon of the past. The result will be . . . a rejuvenated profession in which the leadership will be shared by men and women working together."

*Kellen Cochran Hicks*



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# Risking It

## Women as Museum Leaders

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*Kendall Taylor*

*Profiles by Tracey Linton Craig*

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**F**ive years ago, there was no woman on the United States Supreme Court. No American woman had ever been an astronaut. And no woman had ever shared the presidential ticket of a major political party. Today we have Sandra Day O'Connor, Sally Ride, Geraldine Ferraro. Things are changing — albeit slowly. Young women choosing a career today have many more options open to them. Everything seems possible to these women and, in fact, maybe it is.

Today's young women aiming for museum careers are not, as previously, only heading in the direction of staff positions: curatorial work, registrarial activity or educational interpretation. Now, an increasing number of them want to be directors — of historical societies, of museums, city and municipal museums, science centers — the whole

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KENDALL TAYLOR directs Art Management Associates and is a visiting professor at Saint Lawrence University, as well as a member of the graduate school faculty of George Washington University. During 1983 and 1984, while serving as president of the Women Museum Directors and Administrators' Caucus, she chaired two AAM annual meeting panels on the topic of women as leaders in the museum profession.

MUSEUM NEWS asked Taylor to write about the current status of women in the profession. To amplify her observations MUSEUM NEWS associate editor TRACEY LINTON CRAIG interviewed 10 women who might be considered role models for those just entering the museum field.

The women come from disparate backgrounds and diverse institutions. They represent a variety of management styles. Some planned a career in museums, others entered the profession through the proverbial back door. Each is known and respected in her field, each has made herself visible. Their names are among those that come up when leaders in the museum profession are considered.

Their stories help to shed light on what some of the individual trade-offs of success can be.

range of cultural institutions. And they are planning their careers carefully, career-pathing at 21 for directorships at 30.

Today, the general attitude toward women as leaders is rapidly changing, and women in all fields are moving up in the leadership ranks, dropping accommodative behavior for success-oriented behavior. They are learning to take career-related risks and meeting them with excitement instead of fear.

Part of the process has necessitated putting aside the notion that they need to do a job absolutely perfectly before accepting a leadership position. Women are coming to realize that growing into the position while on the job is normal, is what men have always done and what women have either not realized or been afraid to do. Seldom does one ever have the exact skills necessary when they begin a new position. Up until recently, women have considered such professional moves too "risky." Now, they are beginning to view them as challenging. Men have always viewed them that way. They have generally felt entitled to make mistakes — to once in awhile fall flat on their faces. They know occasional defeats are all part of the game. Women, on the other hand, as a minority in the power structure, have not felt entitled to error, and the fear of falling short has held them back. What many women are coming to realize is that the constant worry over how good one is saps the very same energy necessary for further growth and expansion. To combat these fears, women are now learning to perfect a specific area of expertise and to build on that expertise. They are becoming recognized as experts at something, choosing only certain areas to be expert in, other areas to be just good in and still others to lay aside or drop.

Female role models in the museum world as well as in all the other professions have aided women in this process. Within the past five years, women have come to promi-



nence as leaders in all fields — law, medicine, politics, sports — the whole range of human endeavor. If a woman can become president of a university, a mayor, a jet pilot, an industrial engineer or an architect, becoming a museum director seems almost tame by comparison.

Young women completing undergraduate fine arts, history or science degrees and coupling these degrees in a pure discipline with an MBA or museum studies degree readily consider the top positions in the museum world to be open and attainable to them. They are planning their careers with more care and precision than did women of earlier generations. While in the university, they begin to look for mentors and sponsors to help guide them in their career paths, and they have taken to charting these paths in organized and creative ways. My own female students appear before me with graphs setting out the next 10 years, structured into categories with short- and long-term goals blocked in according to section: where they wish to be in 1995 in terms of profession, personal relationship, finances, geographic location and so forth, with the yearly steps they intend to follow in order to get there. They choose internships with the same predetermination of medical students, looking carefully at what skills these internships will afford them. Except for occasional and unfortunate exceptions, gone are the days of interns standing at copying machines doing mindless work.

Today's future professional uses her apprenticeship period to develop capabilities, decide on the focus of her career and begin to build a network of professional alliances. These women form an early coterie of mentors, guides, sponsors and peers, all of whom play an important role in their professional life. Men have frequently had this "old boys' network" of informal advisors and advocates, but women have just begun to develop their own professional support systems, choosing to align themselves with female as well as male leaders.

The current generation has found inspiration in people like Katherine Coffey, Adelyn Breeskin and Jean Boggs, as well as women who have risen through the ranks more recently — Anne D'Harnoncourt, director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Lisa Taylor, director of the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt Museum in New York City and Jan Muhlert, director of the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth. They have shown women that a leadership role in the museum world is attainable. These role models, along with the literally hundreds of other women professionals in the field, have helped women view themselves as potential leaders rather than as supporters of leaders.

Only a few years ago, women looked for assistant to the director and assistant director positions, thinking they could safely try out their skills before deciding to aim higher. Today they are more often than not applying for the top position. That is not to say they are always getting it. As Linda Sweet has pointed out, while women in the museum field have made impressive progress, they still

face difficulties breaking into senior positions in the largest museums. Speaking at the 1984 AAM annual meeting session, "Room at the Top," Sweet observed that women are still often not perceived by boards of trustees as being capable of or prepared for holding these top positions. Boards still question whether a woman director can be as effective as a man at garnering the necessary respect from business leaders, politicians and other influential people in the community. Most women who have broken into directorships have been hired to head small museums or museums that have had a troubled history. Or they have been on the spot when the directorship opened — perhaps in an acting director capacity or as an administrator or curator. A few were connected with a particular institution through family wealth, previous family association or perceived professional influence before becoming director.

Stereotypes about women as candidates for leadership positions are changing. Notions that women lack business acumen, that they are too temperamental, overly manipulative, that they are specialists rather than generalists and too threateningly competitive to female as well as male board members, are being rethought. The way in which women have started to view themselves — as strong, independent, savvy about business and the politics of power — has precipitated a change in the way others view them. And the overall change in the general climate surrounding women as potential leaders has had an extraordinarily positive effect on people's thinking. In addition, the prevailing attitudes of museum trustees are changing as board structures themselves change. In the past, the average board was predominantly male, with females represented by women from wealthy families, or wives of influential or wealthy men. More and more, however, as board members retire, women professionals are taking their place: lawyers, bankers, doctors, stockbrokers, professors, designers, media people — women from all professions who are financially and professionally successful in their own right.

What remains to be seen is how soon these women will be able to support other women for potential directorships. My guess is it won't take long. Women who seek a leadership role in the museum world are no longer assuming that competence and confidence alone will suffice. Instead, early on they are putting their professional alliances into place and making themselves visible as potential leaders. Young women making their way up through the professional ranks today are far more aware of how important alliances are in hearing about, and being considered for, leadership positions. Engaged in careful and rigorous career planning, mapping out strategies to achieve their goals, they make their decisions with their larger career picture in mind, rather than viewing each job in isolation. They are learning the rules of professional advancement.

To prepare themselves for managerial positions, and with the awareness that they are generally perceived as less experienced in management skills than men, women are



entering management training programs en masse. Ten years ago, when Harvard's museum management training program was still running, the typical class was predominantly male. Nowadays, the ratio for similar programs is 50-50, with women applying yearly in increasing numbers. The Museum Management Institute at Berkeley, Museums Collaborative in New York, the Metropolitan Museum's workshop programs, the American Management Association's seminars and university MBA programs all report increased female participation.

Women entering leadership positions in the museum world are also acknowledging and dealing with the concept of "paying dues." It's a fact that you can't use your influence until you've got it, and organizations frequently will not allow the new leader to implement her ideas until these dues are paid. While the concept has been around a long time, it is a notion frequently outside the experience of women. Only now, with women becoming increasingly aware of power tactics in the workplace, has it become a major issue for them.

Dues-paying, women have found out, usually splits into two categories. Part of the payment is personal, assessing one's own style relative to the style the organization needs. The other half is structural—learning the unwritten rules of the organization, such as where the power in the board really rests, what past alliances and obligations must be taken into consideration, who the key people with regard to the institution are and what decisions can be effectively made at what time. All this takes time, but women are noticing that the payment process can be shortened if they have full access to vital information. As Lois Hart and Karen Stoltz have written, there are other methods to speed up the process: quickly discerning the formal and informal game rules and being willing to accept them until the initial payment period is over, not waiting for an opportunity to excel but making that opportunity occur, developing a personal style of leadership that is intelligent, professional and confident, yet not asexual, stressing the positive instead of the cynical or bitter, being assertive yet patient, having a network of outside professional associates who can give honest feedback and encouragement, and keeping one's personal life completely separate from business activities.<sup>1</sup> That may seem to be a heavy order, but one women have come to understand is crucial to achieving success in a previously male-dominated museum-managerial world.

Being a leader is like being a coach. As head of that team, the woman manager needs to understand what the team expects from her and what she expects from them. She needs to make all this clear—sharing goals, planning well, implementing, then evaluating. Good delegating is critical to the process, and is one of the toughest skills women have had to learn. It is hard to break away from the notion that "nobody can do it better than I." Increasingly, however, women are learning the steps of effective delegation and

incorporating them into their managerial behavior. Developing a climate for delegation, becoming familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of each staff person, determining objectives and developing a plan, women leaders are becoming more comfortable in letting go of certain tasks, in communicating their expectations, monitoring progress and then evaluating—and in some cases reassigning—work. Knowing when to delegate and when not to is the key: if someone likes doing a specific job better than you do, is faster than you or can do it less expensively than you. Delegating is teaching and trusting. It's like showing someone how to ride a bike; eventually they take off on their own and do just fine.

It would be nice to be able to say that women are doing just fine, for in many ways they are. But in other ways their advancement into the management ranks has brought to the surface a different set of problems. In April and May of this year, *The Wall Street Journal*, in conjunction with an American Institute of Public Opinion Gallup poll, surveyed more than 700 female executives from a variety of fields, questioning them on how their careers had taken shape and how they felt about their positions as leaders. What were the rewards and the sacrifices? Their honest answers describe the unique and often difficult role women professionals play in today's world, for with the euphoria of landing the top job often come conflicts not fully anticipated. Frequently, even when they reach a high level, many women still find themselves patronized by men in leadership positions. More than 25 percent of those women polled by Gallup said that, on the whole, their life and work experience was still largely undervalued, and that men all too frequently did not take them seriously. Younger women, in particular, complained that men often exhibited resentment and had difficulty taking orders from them. They described compromises with personal life as tremendously taxing, to the point that many women executives frequently chose to stay single or become separated or divorced. Less than half, 48 percent, of the female executives Gallup polled had ever had children. One young woman told the interviewer, "You have to be very asexual in your image and...hide your personal life." Another went further, saying, "My job has definitely stood in the way of marriage. I feel that if I were to marry, there'd be a new set of expectations and I would be unable to fulfill them at the same time as doing my job."<sup>2</sup> The married woman museum director, returning home late from her institution, may still feel she has to put something together for dinner. And if she has children, the responsibilities are manifold. In contrast, male counterparts frequently have a spouse at home who can provide that support base. It makes a difference.

Women who make it to the top also frequently experience a special type of power failure in that they are often unable to translate their own professional credibility into an organizational power base. Even though a woman may



be doing an outstanding job, neither men nor women have traditionally viewed women managers as being capable of empowering and sponsoring peers and subordinates. Because women are viewed as recipients of power sponsorship, rather than as sponsors of power themselves, they are not seen as being able to pass on favors or make use of their own resources to benefit those who work with them. Herein lies the basic reason that both males and females alike, in 1985, still generally prefer working for men rather than women.<sup>3</sup>

All this, however, is gradually changing, and as the overall structure in America alters, the constructs of power in particular professions will change. What will quicken the pace in the museum world is women forming power bases with and for other women, so that women occupying leadership positions in the museum world increasingly become more powerful by virtue of who they know and what influence they personally wield.

Fortunately, women are finally coming to believe that they have the expertise, experience and intelligence to be leaders in the museum world. No longer are they willing to passively accept a back seat; they will not be wished away. In the past 20 years, women have actively transformed

society. Sixty percent of all women now work outside the home, earning \$500 billion a year and taking home nearly one-third of the nation's pay. These earnings, however, average out to only three-fifths of men's earnings, and women's jobs are almost always at the bottom end of the power line. But this too is changing. Women now form a majority of college graduates, and more women vote than men. The gender gap is rapidly going the way of the generation gap. Within the framework of the museum world, women may not succeed in all cases. But within this century the male-dominated leadership of America's museums will become a phenomenon of the past. The result will be exhilarating: a rejuvenated profession in which the leadership will be shared by men and women working together.

We have much to learn from one another.

#### Notes

1. Lois Hart and Karen Stoltz, "Paying Your Dues: How and For How Long?", *Management Review* (October 1980), pp. 19-24.
2. Helen Rogan, "The Trials and Successes of Women Executives," *The Wall Street Journal National Business Employment Weekly* (November 18, 1984), pp. 23-24.
3. Rosabeth Moss Kanter, "Power Failure in Management Circuits," *Harvard Business Review* (July-August 1979), p. 69.



## From Dream to Reality

### LISA TAYLOR

Director, Cooper-Hewitt Museum, the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Design, New York City

"I felt I couldn't make even one mistake," remembers Lisa Taylor, who in 1969 was the first woman hired to direct a Smithsonian museum. "If I did poorly, it might be another 150 years before they hired another woman museum director!"

An artist by training, Taylor didn't initially plan on a career in museums, though she'd been involved indirectly from the beginning—her father was an architect, her mother painted. She graduated from the Corcoran School of Art to discover "there were only three galleries at that time in Washington—and I didn't paint stripes." So she took a job with the President's Fine Arts Committee, working at the Corcoran in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The Smithsonian first hired her to develop their courses for members, now called the Resident Associate Program. She laughs about those days. "The Smithsonian hired me while I was still a hippie—I cut my pigtail when I went to work."

The program was a tremendous success from the start. She believes the visibility it enjoyed made a difference. "What I



did *happened*," she explains. "There are so many wonderful women in museums whose work is unrecognized. I am where I am because I was publicly visible." She thinks visibility is an important factor for women. "Don't get buried in the stacks," she advises those just entering the profession. "You must have confidence in your abilities—and be willing to be judged."

When the Smithsonian asked her to take on the directorship of the old Cooper Union in New York and develop the concept for a public museum of decorative arts, she was thrilled with the opportunity. She knew she had "good eyes, as far as the work itself," and thought that with common sense, she'd get along. She was 35 at the time and "looked 17—that was a real handicap!"

An important part of the job was raising money, something she hadn't had a great deal of experience with and still doesn't especially like, though she's currently in the midst of a \$20 million campaign to expand the museum. "So much of running a museum is the need to raise money. You're forever giving and going to parties; your job never really ends."

Taylor says that as a woman it's hard to make a complete separation between work and family. From the start, she has had household help, but she has also found ways to spend time with her two children and three stepchildren. Until her youngest boy turned 12, she went home daily to have lunch with him. She still goes home—two blocks from the museum—for lunch, sometimes entertaining there.

For Taylor, the distinction between work and family is blurred. At home, she finds she still needs to put in extra hours. "When everyone is fast asleep, I get up," Taylor says. "I

do some of my best thinking sitting on the bathroom floor at two and three o'clock in the morning."

She didn't plan it this way. In fact, she thought she would work for a couple of years, "and then go back to painting and making babies. But it became so much a part of my life. There is a great sense of personal fulfillment in creating programs," she says. "Taking my dream or someone else's and making it a reality—I never thought I had it in me."

She's not ready to stop yet. "Every time I think I've done it all I discover there is a whole new challenge, an area that we haven't touched yet. The day that doesn't happen, I'll leave."

Taylor has some additional advice for women entering the profession. "Learn as much about as many different things as possible. Learn a special area in addition to art history," she says, pointing as an example to video, which she feels will soon play a substantial role in museums. In addition to doing work that is publicly visible, she reminds women, "Don't be too proud. Younger people are afraid they will be stuck doing something they don't like. When the chips are down, I'm not above stuffing envelopes, though I don't have to do it too often!"

Finally, Taylor says, there is "nothing more lovely than being able to rely on good staff. Delegating is hard to learn, but important to strive for, because it frees you to do creative things. I never tell someone *how* to do anything, but *what* I want done. You need to be able to hand someone something and say 'This is yours.' " Admitting your mistakes and rectifying them is important, too: "If you discover a better way to do something, you should be able to say, 'I goofed' rather than running it into the ground."



## A Crash Course in Museum Politics

### SUSAN BERTRAM

*Executive Director, Museums Collaborative, Inc.,  
New York City*

"When you're looking at it from a snowdrift in Minnesota, MOMA takes on mythic proportions," reminisces Susan Bertram, explaining how she came out of Carleton College with a BA to be dazzled by New York City's cultural milieu. She began her career as a cataloger in the film department at the Museum of Modern Art, before moving on to international program assistant. "It never occurred to me to negotiate salary. I considered myself fortunate to get the job."

Things were to change soon, and change dramatically. The



year was 1969, and Bertram agreed to substitute for a vacationing friend who worked in the museum library duplicating announcements and such. The museum workers went on strike. And Bertram found herself the only one in the communications office. She ran off sheets announcing strike meetings, and ended up as a spokesperson to the media. She later became head of the union. "It was a crash course in the more painful aspects of museum finances and management," says Bertram. "It gave me a broader perspective on problems. And I became more interested in museums as institutions and in the role they play."

Five years later, she was recruited to work for Museums Collaborative as director of the Cultural Voucher Program, which brought museums together with community-based organizations. In 1977, she became executive director, and was charged with general management, program development and fund raising, among other responsibilities. The collaborative, a nonprofit organization, provides mid-career training for senior museum personnel, undertakes research and demonstrates projects on issues of concern to the field and offers consulting services to museums and other cultural organizations.

For Bertram, taking risks has been a theme. "I have always taken on jobs that I thought were a little beyond my reach—for example, the union at MOMA. And the collaborative—before coming here, I had no management experience. You rise to meet the demands and you learn in the process."

In some ways, she says, her career would have benefited from more conscious planning. "I could have been more aggressive." She will consider future job opportunities more cautiously, because she would like to have a role in shaping the future of museums, in helping people to understand museums. She's not yet sure what that next step will be. At present, she is on maternity leave, having worked until the day before the baby was born. "At this point in my career," says Bertram, who is in her mid-thirties, "it was a pleasure to take off the five months."

One of the problems for women in museum work, believes Bertram, is that as a group, they do not receive the amount of encouragement men do. Though she acknowledges the importance of mentors, she says, "It didn't happen that way for me. Some people need to find their own way." Paraphrasing Benjamin Franklin, she added, "Experience may be the best teacher, but it takes longer."

## You've Got to Say No



**BETTYE COLLIER-THOMAS**

*Director, National Archives for Black Women's History and the Mary McLeod Bethune Museum, Washington, D. C.*

"You've got to say no. You can't be all things to all people." For Bettye Collier-Thomas, director of the Bethune Museum and National Archives for Black Women's History in Wash-

ington, D.C., those words of wisdom were learned the hard way. "Last February," she explains, "the doctor sent me home with chronic fatigue. I had 43 invitations to speak that month. I had to turn almost all of them down."

Thomas had been, as is her style, working nearly nonstop. An administrator, she also has her hand in planning exhibits, research projects, outreach and other programs for the museum and archives, a young institution that she developed at the invitation of the National Council of Negro Women in the late 1970s. Within two years, with the assistance of a small but dedicated staff, she had opened the museum to the public and designed, directed and produced the first national scholarly research conference on black women.

To do that, she says, she worked literally seven days a week. In addition, she has served as a special consultant to the National Endowment for the Humanities, traveling and providing technical assistance to minority museums and historical organizations throughout the country. She coordinated the first national black museum conference in 1980. She has published a number of articles, and speaks at professional conferences of the AAM, the Organization of American Historians, American Historical Association and the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, to name a few. And she is working on two books, one on Baltimore's black community, the other a history of black women's organizations. Prior to the doctor's diagnosis of fatigue she had been working full time and going to the Library of Congress every Saturday and Sunday, as well as two or three nights a week.

"Like many professional women," Thomas says, "I'd sleep



three hours, and then get up and work. I thought I would run on that agenda forever," she says ruefully.

It was Thomas who created the museum and archives, providing a structure where there was none and developing the physical facility. "If you're wedded to your work, to the creation of an institution, you feel obligations others may not feel." She notes with pride that few institutions in five years can match the growth of Bethune, "but it has been at a personal cost to me and the staff."

"I'm an enthusiastic person. I believe in going for the top. I thrive on challenge, on the impossible," says Thomas. A supportive husband made a difference, she believes, as did the fact she has no children. "In many cases, my family does not impinge on my professional designs."

Thomas, who earned her MA in 1966 from Atlanta University and her PhD in American history from George Washington University in 1974, points out that there are not many Afro-Americans with similar credentials in the museum world. "We need more academicians in the museum world. We need people with that expertise who can take on difficult research projects and interpret within the context of a museum."

There is a need for more minorities in the profession, at many levels, she says. "Until recently, many did not even think of it as an option. I would like to see more Afro-American women seriously consider art history and museum studies. There are more jobs than they know."

Thomas feels that it is difficult to separate obstacles on the basis of race or sex. There are really two levels of discrimination that come into play, she notes, and they are brought home by the comment of a black male historian, who asked her, "When will you move back to the mainstream of Afro-American history? Don't you think women's history is a fad?"

A self-defined workaholic, Thomas doesn't even hesitate when asked if she'd do it over again. "Definitely. But I'd go back, build in more time for things beyond the museum." Now she is spending more time on her books, which are important as she moves toward recognition as a major professional historian.

She's worked hard to get where she is, and her advice reflects that. "Do not expect people to give you anything. You have to go out and get it."

## A Delicate Balance



**EDITH TONELLI**

*Director, Frederick Wight Gallery,  
University of California at Los Angeles*

Balance is a key word for Edith Tonelli, director of the Frederick Wight Gallery at UCLA—balance between personal and professional, between research and administration, between practical and theoretical.

She's new to the job, having made the decision to move to the West Coast in 1982. And she likes the fact that it's a university museum. "This job leaves my options open," she explains. "Here I am a teacher, researcher, curator and administrator. Probably in the next job I will have to focus more. I won't have time to do it all."

Moving west was not an easy decision for Tonelli, who is East Coast born and bred. She graduated from Vassar in 1971 with a degree in American studies. Her first internship was at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, and she went on to the DeCordova Museum in Lincoln, Massachusetts, to work for two years as curator. A Smithsonian fellowship enabled her to finish her dissertation (her PhD is from Boston University in American studies); then for three years she worked as director of the art gallery at the University of Maryland. In 1981 she took a Museum Management Institute course, which stirred her interest in Los Angeles. When the Wight directorship came open, she applied. "I felt ready for the change," she says. "I was looking for something that would really challenge me." She had some fears, in that she was moving away from her professional network. But then, she points out, lots of East Coast people are making the move west. She doesn't feel isolated.

When she applied, she tried to imagine herself as the director. "I talked about my own visions for the gallery," she says, remembering the interview. "Vision and ideas are important. They were choosing a vision as much as they were choosing an individual."

Tonelli feels that she is starting a new organization, working on changing the image and direction of the gallery. "The creative part is looking at the institution as a project—putting the pieces together, putting a team of people together." Management in the arts, she explains, is creative. "There is room for very creative work in bringing people together who



have shared values. The creative process is the same as making a painting."

One of the things she likes best about university museums is that everyone is expected to be involved in content. "The reason I'm happy here is I have the encouragement and the time to spend on research. I spend about one day a week either in the library or visiting artists' studios."

Being in the university environment also puts her in close touch with students, whom she enjoys because they are still exploring their values, something important to Tonelli. "My ability to think about broader issues is part of who I am. I have an ability to focus on the practical and yet explore some of the theoretical. I'm not losing sight of why I'm in the field."

As advisor to what she considers the next generation of top management in museums, she finds herself thinking about the theoretical issues quite a bit. She points out, for example, that she has just finished writing a chapter on the history and philosophy of art museums in the United States for a museum reference book to be published soon.

She is adamant in advising her students to get a solid education. "Education is your union card," she says. "Education

is the key. As much as we can network, women must still have the credentials."

Tonelli has also spoken about how important it is — for women in particular — to learn the ground rules, to create their own strategies for reaching the top. As a participant in a recent annual meeting panel, she recommended, "Don't be so focused on yourself all the time. You are not always the problem. You don't always have to take another course and be much better at this. Look around at your environment, learn from those people that are there."

At that same session, Tonelli also discussed an important concept she feels women must reach. They tell themselves, "I don't have to live two or three lives. I don't have to be the perfect mother, the perfect wife, the perfect manager. I can have one life and have all those elements in it. I can think in terms of my life as *one* life." She continued, "I was conditioned to think that you have a career and it's *here* and your family and it's *there*. Men grow up thinking they are going to have this wonderful life and they are going to have a career in it and they are going to have a family in it. It's one life that they balance and they manage. They don't think of it as having to keep those things separate."

## Know Who to Go To



**MARY SCHMIDT CAMPBELL**

*Director, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York City*

A lot of people wanted to see Mary Schmidt Campbell succeed. Some were at Swarthmore, where she took her BA in English but discovered a love for art history; others were at Syracuse University, where she earned her MA in art history in 1973 and later her PhD in humanities.

Ronald Kuchta, director of the Everson Museum, was one of those supporters. While she was a graduate student at Syracuse, he invited her to organize an exhibit on Romare Bearden at the Everson. Through that experience, she "became engaged with the idea of working with artifacts." Kuchta liked her work and soon offered her a position as curator, while she finished school. That gave her the opportunity to see many different aspects of museum work, and she remained until 1976, at the same time writing art criticism for the *Syracuse New Times*.

After a brief time out to have her second child, Campbell heard from Bearden that the Studio Museum in Harlem was looking for a director. She chose the challenge of administration. "It wasn't too difficult a decision. [My husband] had finished his PhD; he was ready to move. I planned to complete my dissertation at some point. It seemed that the Studio Museum was perfectly suited to my academic training."

The museum was almost 10 years old, with a staff of 15. She would follow the legacy left by Ed Spriggs, an innovator in museum education, who had already made the museum into *the* place to go to find about African art and African-American art of the diaspora. It was also an organization in transition, needing to move from community arts organization to professional museum. When Campbell took over, there were many questions to answer. Would the museum stay in Harlem? What kind of leadership should it have? "I stepped into a controversial situation," she says now. "I was so green, too naive to know how difficult it would be."

Campbell, who says she's a "quick learner," had much to learn. They began the search for a new building that was to serve as a rallying symbol for the process of institutionalization. She approached major foundations for funding. And she got a trio of specialists who helped her learn what to look for in a building. "It's important to realize and make an effort to



identify those people with whom you can develop the skills you need," she says. "I feel it is important to be able to know who to go to."

She's careful not to call that "networking," a term she sees as exploitive. "If you can go to someone, it must be mutually beneficial—their own interests are enlarged. It's a good business relationship."

Campbell, who spends 75 percent of her time on administrative tasks—and much of that on fund raising—says she really likes selling the museum. She is proud of the gains she and her staff of 42 have made in establishing the institution as a professional museum, one that has been running successfully for three years now in its new space. "I feel very strongly fund raising is looking at who you are and what you do, transmitting who you are. You must have a clarity of vision about what you want, set it down and transmit it." She has a clear vision of what the museum will become. "My concern is to navigate the museum," she says, but she is less clear what the next step will be for her.

She has learned along the way that in order to avoid "burn-out" it is necessary to learn how to say no. "It's essential to make a division between home and museum. I have two boys in my family and they are the most important. They are the focus." She draws protective lines to maintain that balance. "I try not to come [to the museum] on weekends. I try to limit the number of evening events to no more than one or two a week. And I try to limit the amount of travel I do."

But she has made time to sit on the boards of national organizations—Film Forum and ArtTable—and to attend professional meetings of the College Art Association, the Association of Art Museum Directors, the African-American Museums Association. She stresses the importance of what she calls "professional chitchat."

When asked her advice for young professionals, she said she had more to say to established professionals. Choosing her words carefully, she said, "I am somewhat disappointed in the degree of opportunities available for minorities. I see a lot of talented people, but I do not see a lot of doors open."

## Lead from Your Strength



**ELAINE HEUMANN GURIAN**

*Director, Exhibit Center, Boston Children's Museum*

Elaine Heumann Gurian still doesn't own a suit. She is, in her own words, "pretty quirky—too noisy, too flamboyant for some people. I'm a pushy broad."

She is many other things as well. She has directed the Boston Children's Museum Exhibit Center since 1972, serving as project director for exhibits that have helped put the innovative museum on the map. And from the start, she has done it her own way—with indomitable, if indefinable, style. That's something Gurian feels very strongly about. "Do it, go for it," she encourages others. "But don't give up who you are. Don't give up being a woman. We are fundamentally differ-

ent. We have a lot to offer. Do not change your style—the world needs broader differences in style. Lead from your strength."

Gurian, who says she started out intending to be a mother, got into the museum world by chance. She was married to a physician: "I was a suburban lady. And I wasn't very good at it." She had a BA in art history from Brandeis, earned in 1958. For several years she attended night school at State College at Boston for her MA in elementary education, with a specialization in art. In 1969, after an illness left her son brain damaged, she left home, in part to work her way through the experience.

She became involved in a city arts project called Summerthing, developing a mobile crafts program and discovery workshops. Along with several others, she spearheaded a campaign to reopen the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston and worked as director of education there until 1972 when Michael Spock, director of the Boston Children's Museum, hired her. "I have the best job in America," she says. It is 100 percent administrative, but "administration is a creative job," she says. Spock "is as good as his reputation suggests. He is a totally human, decent, gentle individual. He is not threatened by strong women."

She is grateful to her mentors—who were mostly men, she points out. "I'm 47 years old. I had no internal aspirations to be successful. I learned it all on the job. Beyond my wildest imagination, I have done things."

And she isn't ready to leave the Children's Museum yet. She's been offered the directorship at another institution but, she says, "I have the job I want. If you can't get your own dreams to happen, then you want your own place. I do get my own visions. I am not thwarted."

She is especially interested in how the individual learns, in a volitional sense. "I am interested in the least of the learner," she adds, "in people who are shy or learning disabled or who have personal difficulties. How do we make learning non-threatening for them in neutral, safe, seemingly leisure-time



activities?" She is intrigued with levels of learning, in how to design an exhibit so it provides something for everyone, so the individual learners, not the exhibit designer, decide what they want.

Gurian's three children are an integral part of her work. While the balance must be restructured daily, it has helped that "the museum has currency with their friends. My kids have worked at the museum all their lives. My work is about children, children are a part of the process. They are important consultants."

Gurian believes that the "price of success for women in my age bracket is that it is very difficult to hold a marriage together." Hers didn't hold. "The rules of the kids weren't as

tough as the marriage rules," she explains. "I raised my kids to be self-sufficient."

When asked about risks she's taken, Gurian hesitates. "My life," she says, "is a single piece. Everything is public. There is no separation between. It's all the same—I love my children, my life, my job." Making life a seamless piece is indeed a big risk. It means not hiding much. Everything she does is in the open, she says. That's her style.

"Everything I was taught, all the assumptions, were wrong." But she is optimistic for the future. "We are re-creating work roles and relationships in an enormously transitional time. There are no set assumptions." Very simply, she says, "We need to be kind to each other."

## Management Means Confidence



**ALICE HEMENWAY**

*Director and Site Administrator,  
Pennsbury Manor, Morrisville, Pa.*

For Alice Hemenway, the path to a museum directorship has involved a number of compromises — including a long-distance commuting marriage.

A little less than two years ago, Hemenway became director and site administrator of Pennsbury Manor, where she supervises a team of some 15 employees. One of the best things about the job, she might tell you, is that she once again shares a home full time with her husband Carl, a chemist in Philadelphia.

Many in the museum business know Hemenway for her role in developing the Regional Conference of Historical Agencies (RCHA), a museum service organization headquartered in upstate New York. She is often a speaker at AAM and AASLH annual meetings, and she gives her time generously to the AAM's Museum Assessment Program.

Hemenway didn't know from the start she would end up in museum work, though she *can* tell you a wonderful story about the time her father, a Navy historian, took her to the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History where she came upon the mummified hand of an Egyptian princess. That childhood memory stayed with her, and the fascination with museums grew. She went on to get her BA in American history from Vanderbilt University, writing an honors paper on the educational functions of history museums that led her to Bill Alderson, who was then director of the American Association for State and Local History.

After graduating, her first job was in the Yale University Art Gallery, where she met director Alan Shestack. "I was beginning to get a sense of museums as a profession," she says. Working with Shestack and her "second mentor" Ted Pillsbury, then a curator at Yale and now director of the Kimbell Art Museum, she began to realize she wanted to be a part of that profession. On Alderson's recommendation, she applied to the Cooperstown graduate program in museum studies in 1973. "It was what I wanted, but I didn't even know it," she says.

Meanwhile, she had married and her husband was in the midst of applying to graduate schools. He was accepted at Dartmouth, but chose not to go, for it would have been impossible for Hemenway to work in her field. Cornell University provided the compromise. Hemenway ended up working at the Dewitt Historical Society and later on a Bicentennial project before coming to the RCHA. The agency was headquartered in Syracuse, an hour and 15 minutes away in good weather but straight across the snow belt. For nearly two and a half years, she had an apartment in Syracuse, coming home three days a week to Ithaca.

In 1979 Hemenway was named executive director of RCHA. Six months later, her husband was off to Philadelphia with a new job. The two had made the decision carefully. They would commute a little longer, this time every other weekend between Philadelphia and upstate New York.

"It was a professional decision," she explains, "made easier by not having children." She wanted to stabilize the organization's funding and oversee the completion of a planning document. She believes the personal compromises have been worth it. Still, she finds it frustrating that his salary is twice hers, though she's been working 14 years to his four.



At RCHA, Hemenway first worked under Doug Fischer, who "force-fed me management skills" for the first 18 months on the job. Once she was named director, she increased the field services and established the first program of shared staffing — pooling professional expertise among neighboring museums — in New York State. At RCHA Hemenway became, as she phrases it, "a public presence." That didn't hurt, she admits, when the time came to apply for Pennsbury. Nor did the fact that she had clear visions of what could be done with the historic site. At Pennsbury, Hemenway relies on a management team of six, a concept she learned back at RCHA. Collegiality was the byword there, but sometimes, she laughs, "It was like the construction of an origami duck—I reported to [a coworker] on some things, she reported to me on others." Now Hemenway spends some 80 percent of her time on administrative duties

and program development though she tries to make time for research, a "luxury" for her. "I see myself as someone who makes it possible for others to do work."

Much of what Hemenway has learned about management was learned on the job. "Confidence is a lot of management," she says. "If you have good instincts, then management training is a format. It validates what you do."

Barely out of the ranks of young professionals herself, Hemenway has several recommendations for those just starting. Get to know people others seem to respect, she advises. "Try to have some involvement beyond your own institution to give you some perspective." And go to graduate school, she admonishes: "It guarantees a minimum level of competence. Do a discipline and museum studies. It will save you from five years of mistakes."

## Neo-Renaissance Museum Woman



### CINDY SHERRELL-LEO

*Director, Museum and Field Services,  
Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas*

Recently, Cindy Sherrell-Leo got a brochure in the mail announcing a special seminar on teaching women to be administrators. She wasn't impressed. Are management skills something only women need to learn? she wondered. Why do we need seminars? Do we have some basic defect?

"As long as we *claim* we have a problem," she says, "we have a problem. Women should develop positive directions rather than to protest past or present, real or imagined, inequities." She continued, "People hire women not because we're women, but because we can do the job."

Leo hasn't ever spent much time bellyaching about her situation. Back in the early 1960s, when she found herself in

the personnel division of Sears & Roebuck, stuck in what she knew was a dead-end job, she did something about it. "There was no place for women to move in administration at that time. And I was bored with the job. I asked, 'Why am I training these folks for management positions when I can't move up?'" After considering a number of fields, she went to the art museum at the University of Texas at Austin and announced to the director that she was interested in volunteer work. To her surprise, the director said, "But I want to *hire* you."

"I took a big cut in salary," she says, "because I wanted to do something I enjoy." She came in with no formal training — her education was in business administration — but with enthusiasm and the knowledge that she worked best under pressure, and with a challenge. The assistant to the director position lasted two years, and that experience, along with her business education, served her well when she became business manager and director of the Laguna Gloria Art Museum in Austin. The museum's accountant had quit, and the books were under IRS investigation. "The first thing I had to do was reconstruct a whole year of books. And I had to explain to the IRS why we shouldn't be taxed on items from our gift shop." It's possible, she says, the fact her husband was an accountant had something to do with why she got the job. Or maybe not. She went on to set up a docent program, help develop the museum's art school and start outreach programs, especially for senior citizens.

Many of her tactics, she says now, were seat-of-the-pants management. Leo says her real education came from attending professional meetings. "That's the key to our profession. I hear people so often [after a session] say 'That was interesting, but it doesn't apply to me.' You need to figure out how it *does* apply." And that's what Leo did. She helped form the small museums committee of the AAM. She served six years on the AAM council; she's now a member of AASLH's council. And she has been an ex officio council member of the Texas Association of Museums (TAM) since 1973. Those meetings, and the Winedale seminars, provided the backbone of her training.

Leo is now director of field services for the Texas Historical



Commission. She spends half her time on the road working as an advisor and serving as a resource for more than 700 museums, 254 county historical commissions and 300 heritage organizations in Texas. "I do what I do because I love it," she says. "Sure it involves time away from family. And I make extra time to serve on committees, to speak at conferences.

"With the low salaries in this profession, it has to be because you love your job," she went on. "If we could only educate people not to take jobs at these salaries. As long as we continue to take jobs at low pay, the problems will exist." In advising new museums on how to set salary scales for directors, Leo recommends they look at what the principal of the local high school makes.

Leo believes this is the age of the neo-renaissance museum woman. "We're coming into our own," she says. This woman

must be expert in all areas. "She must not be concerned so much with her own identity, but with that of the entire profession," says Leo. "And she will be recognized."

Leo has been speaking up for a long time on the issue of recognition for women in museum work. Women need to have a higher profile, she believes. "Women need to communicate their contributions better."

But she's tired of being the only one to raise her voice when women are shortchanged. Recently the TAM nominating committee prepared its slate for the upcoming elections. They nominated two women whose names, Leo says, are relatively unknown, effectively assuring that the election will go to the men, whose names are familiar. There were other women they could have named. "If I had been there, I'd have said, hey... but it's time for others to take up the lance."

## Breaking Barriers



### SYLVIA WILLIAMS

*Director, National Museum of African Art,  
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.*

It was a pretty big risk in the 1950s. There were no role models for Sylvia Williams to follow when she decided to major in art history at Oberlin College. There were few women in powerful museum positions, even fewer blacks and no black women. "I could have come out and not had a job," Williams remembers. But she persevered, and got her first job working in the library at the Museum of Modern Art. Today she is director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art in Washington. "My mother wonders to this day how it all happened," she says with a laugh.

She interrupted her career in museum work to become more involved with contemporary issues in the 1960s. She

worked with an international exchange program, tried her hand at fund raising and lived in Nigeria for two years. But her first love was art history. And she didn't want to teach. So she chose in 1970 to go back to school. She was accepted at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts, and attended night school while beginning work at the Brooklyn Museum under a Mellon Fellowship. She moved from assistant curator to associate curator, then to department curator of African, Oceanic and New World cultures before the Smithsonian approached her with its offer of the directorship in 1983.

"I had to give it a lot of thought," Williams says. For one thing, it meant asking her husband to relocate to Washington. He was willing and she thought the job would be a challenge. "I enjoy administration, but I did not have an extensive background in it. I was interested in what I could achieve." After 11 years as a curator, she was intrigued by the idea of trying administration, as well as by the fact that the job would include elements of both roles.

Williams doesn't really look at it as administration. "You've got to have an excitement about—and a deep love for—materials of one sort or another, their esthetic qualities," she explains. "Otherwise, it's a business enterprise. The goal that drives you is to convey your excitement about objects and cultures to the public. As a museum director, if you are captivated by the material and concerned with getting that across, then you can take the programmatic steps to do so. There is no greater reward than to see the public getting excited at an exhibition, especially about something they didn't even know existed."

That excitement is something Williams carries over into her personal life. "I don't make a great distinction between my private and professional lives," she says, and admits that if she had children it might be different. For her, the need to make a division is "not something I dwell on. It's an individual thing," she explains. "It depends on whether you let those things bother you."

As a relative newcomer to the directorship, Williams is very involved in her museum and in planning for its future. Soon she will have a new facility in the Quadrangle on the Mall and she already has ideas for exhibitions.



While others may call her a pathbreaker, Williams doesn't see it that way. She admits it hasn't been particularly easy, but "You don't stop to ask, 'Am I breaking a path?' I think of being a woman and what that entails, but first, I think 'I am black.' For blacks, the whole issue of feminism is a difficult one. You are black first, then you deal with the woman issue." While she has never been denied a position on discriminatory grounds, she does think that "there's an emotional pressure in just applying." She likens it to the challenges a

minority student experiences in being the first to integrate a school — something she knows about first-hand. "You need extraordinary dedication to pull you over the hurdles. Part of it is a commitment to your own group. The pressure is not to fail."

For those thinking of entering the museum profession, Williams recommends thorough academic training. "Start as early as you can. Degrees take time. And if you are well trained, you have a good crack at getting into the field."

## A Different Ball Game



### PATTI CARR BLACK

*Director, Mississippi State Historical Museum,  
Jackson, Mississippi*

"The glorious thing about being an administrator is that you can determine the direction of an institution. If you see a need, you can take the steps to correct it. You can start new projects and mold the character of the institution. You do not have that capability lower in the hierarchy," says Patti Carr Black, who has directed the Mississippi State Historical Museum since 1976. But she didn't plan to be a museum administrator.

In 1951, when she entered college at Mississippi University for Women, she wasn't even aware of museum work as a field. Her background in studio art and library science (she holds an MA from Emory University) eventually led to it. And she thinks that is still an appropriate background for the kind of job she holds. But she believes young women who aspire to top administrative positions must, as have men before, target their careers.

"I didn't do that," she says. "I was married and raising a child—that's what I thought I was doing." She moved to New York City, working as a librarian first for the Metropolitan Museum of Art and then at Time-Life. Then a divorce

changed everything. "I went seriously into the job market. I had to make a compromise after the divorce. It was too difficult to raise my daughter alone in New York, so I moved back to Mississippi. Yet, ironically, that led to a career in museum work."

Under the guidance of Charlotte Capers — "a wonderful mentor" — Black moved from curator of exhibits for the state museum to director of the archives and library division of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, before taking on the directorship of the museum (which includes administration of two historic sites). Her predecessor Capers "really cleared the path. She would tell you, probably, that she got her job because of World War II; all the men were gone. She was capable, strong and well liked. I feel fortunate to have been trained by her, and I hope my career will reflect her standards."

One thing Black likes about her job is that she can balance research with administration. "It's hard to give up research," she explains. She takes an active role in developing exhibits and is in the process of overhauling the museum's permanent exhibits. While she has taken advantage of the American Association for State and Local History's seminars in management, most of what she knows she has "learned by doing. For my generation, that was the way."

Black has been actively involved in national organizations and just recently stepped down from her elected position as secretary of AASLH. She does Museum Assessment Program consultations, has served on accreditation visiting committees for the AAM and is a frequent speaker at meetings. The National Museum Act and the Center for the Study of Southern Culture have counted her on their advisory boards and she has been a member of the National Endowment for the Humanities Museum Program advisory panel. At first, she says, "I thought I didn't have the time to devote to outside organizations. But now, I realize that what I bring back is important to my institution."

For those just entering the profession, Black believes it's a different ball game today. "If someone knows early on they want to be in museum administration, every step can be choreographed. Volunteer work is an impressive way to start, and then on to training programs." She predicts many opportunities for women in museum administration, but unfortunately, budget constrictions are the reason. She notes that before she became director, no men applied for the job. "Had it not been for the low salary, it would have been different. I accepted it gratefully." But, she says, "Once women get into those administrative positions, they can do battle more effectively." Δ



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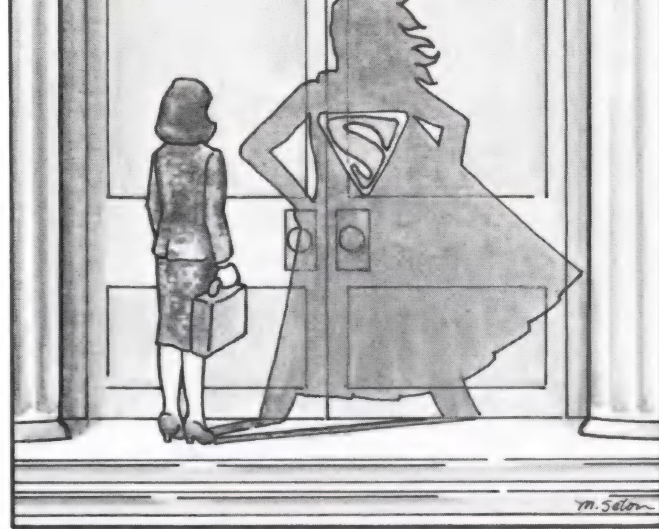
# The Right Preparation and the Right Attitude

**A**t a time when many museums are facing a struggle for basic survival, leadership is the quality most frequently mentioned as a museum's governing board begins the search for a new director. What people usually mean by "leadership" is a kind of personal charisma combined with an aura of authority, qualities that traditionally are thought to be possessed by men only, with very few exceptions. How often do you hear the term "charisma" applied to a woman?

Although there are many separate attributes that could define museum leadership, the following appear to be essential: a breadth of vision; a strong commitment to one's institution and to its ultimate goals; the ability to inspire people to work toward those goals; the ability to organize one's followers into administrative units; and the skill to coordinate the efforts of the people involved to achieve the desired goals. Viewed in this manner, leadership is a condition that can be achieved by commitment, experience and training—both formal and on-the-job.

Many women currently in the field have attained a level of professional development that qualifies them for leadership roles, but they often feel disadvantaged because of the historical view that leaders are male. For museums to flourish, there must be strong leadership at all levels in every institution, large and small. And there is evidence that today many women are providing that leadership.

Although more women than ever before entered the field in the last decade, and many have achieved executive positions in small and medium-size museums, relatively few



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Patricia Ullberg and Joanna H. Wos

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women have become directors of major institutions. Until the museum community—including museum governing boards, executive search committees and museum directors—begins to realize that both men and women have the inherent ability to lead, the current generation of women museum professionals will tend to remain at their present stage of leadership development.

The prospects would seem favorable for women to move into positions of leadership within the next decade. For one reason, women vastly outnumber men both as professionals in the field and as trainees in museum studies programs. The fact that the pool of qualified museum professionals is predominantly female could tip the balance in women's favor, if the women working in the field and the students who will follow them actively prepare for leadership roles.

What will it take to move more women into top positions? We discussed the issues of leadership and management training with professionals who have been in the field from seven to 22 years. We contrasted the realities of the workplace with the expectations of students in museum studies programs, and explored whether the programs were providing the basic management training professionals think is a necessity. The answer, it seems, is a combination of the right preparation and the right attitude.

We spoke with representatives from 10 museum studies programs across the country. As expected, most reported a larger percentage of female students than male in the last five years, with the enrollments ranging from 70 to 90 percent female in most programs. These programs varied greatly in their disciplinary emphasis, the number of students, and whether the classes were taught by museum professionals or academic faculty. While most students initially aspire to curatorial positions, the majority of the programs recently have seen more evidence of interest in administrative positions, although it is usually male students who express the most interest in museum administration.

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JOANNA H. WOŚ has been director of the Oswego County Historical Society, Oswego, N.Y., and curator of the Octagon, Washington, D.C. She recently completed a temporary appointment at the Institute of Museum Services and now lives in Albany, N.Y.



A number of the programs are making an effort to provide more management-oriented courses, often because their alumni have stressed the importance of such studies. Where management courses are offered as part of the curriculum, they commonly address personnel management, budgeting, grant writing, fund raising, accounting and long-range planning. These courses are part of the core curriculum in some programs, and practicing museum professionals are used frequently as teachers. In other programs management courses are electives usually taught by academic faculty with no experience in museum work.

We asked a number of students currently enrolled in these programs about their expectations. All the students interviewed had some working experience in museums before entering the programs, several had worked in museums as undergraduates, and a sizeable number had decided on a museum career after working in the field for one or two years after college.

The students have very specific reasons for choosing their programs. One young woman now enrolled in the Cooperstown graduate program in museum studies liked "its balance of academic and administrative courses. I've worked in art museums and at Sotheby's, and met a lot of people who had good art backgrounds, but they lacked management skills." The opportunity to intern at a well-known institution is commonly cited as a reason for choosing a program, as is a program's relationship with a particular museum or gallery. Many students are committed to a core discipline. Some plan to earn a master's degree or a doctorate after completing their museum studies, mentioning the desire for a rigorous academic education in conjunction with their museum studies program. A student who intends to become a museum director disagrees, and is taking his degree in museum studies. "If professionalism is to come to the field, students should have the background a museum studies program provides, including management training." He will not be taking accounting, however: "I can hire someone to do that."

The students seemed more reluctant to discuss their salary expectations or long-term career goals. A second-year student in the Museum Studies Program at George Washington University remarked that she didn't have a definite career goal when she started the program, but now wants to be the assistant director in a small museum. "Small museums offer more opportunity for a woman to advance, and I'd like to run my own show someday. I think a lot of the women in my program would like to be leaders of the pack, but it's hard in a large museum; there's definitely a male hierarchy."

For most students, successfully completing their coursework and landing their first professional job are immediate concerns that override all future career considerations. They have a fairly realistic idea of salary levels in the field, although one museum studies director remarked: "The students may know what entrant salaries are, but

that's meaningless until they have to support themselves on those salaries."

The question of low salaries is a particular issue for women museum professionals, and some female students intent on curatorial positions may rethink their career plans after entering the field. Administrative and high-authority positions command the best salaries in most fields, and museum work is no exception. Freda Nicholson, executive director of the Science Museums of Charlotte, North Carolina, thinks that women should "demand a decent pay level for their professional work. Women add to the problem by being willing to accept lower pay. They will have to change if they want to compete for top jobs; it's a matter of seeing the whole picture. The museum field as a whole is going to have to address this issue. It hurts the field that women are willing to work for lower pay."

Personal greed does not motivate museum professionals, who as a group are so dedicated to their work they could appear to lack survival sense. People who enter the museum field tend to have an overwhelming interest in their disciplines, or in teaching, not in management. For a student or a beginning professional, most administrative tasks can look pretty grubby when compared to the excitement of writing an exhibition catalog. But career goals frequently change or shift in focus. The desire to have more authority, to exercise professional autonomy, to envision larger goals and be able to implement them, often incline a person toward a management role, and probably have more overall influence than salary considerations.

Alice Hemenway, director of Pennsbury Manor in Morrisville, Pennsylvania, summed up her role as an administrator. "A lot of people are better scholars and curators than I, but not a lot of people can make it possible for a curator or



**"We add layers to our skills as we need them." —Susan Stitt, Director, Museums at Stony Brook, New York**

an educator to do their work better than I can." She attended the Cooperstown program "when it was even more strongly academic and curatorial than it is now. They wouldn't talk about money in the management courses; I learned the substance of my management training on the job. Before Cooperstown, I worked about 10 months at the Yale University Art Gallery. My office was in the director's suite, so my coffee breaks were shared with the policy and decision-makers. That was a very significant thing. But not



for anything would I give up having gone to Cooperstown. It prevented me from making many mistakes in my first five years. I also made valuable contacts. It accelerated my career and formalized conclusions I'd already come to."

Professional work at almost every level entails some administrative responsibility. A new professional can begin to learn management skills early, and build on the experience. Linda Lewis was under 30 when she assumed the directorship of the Southwest Museum of Science and



**"I know I can learn anything if it applies to something I want to accomplish." — Christine Miles, Director, Fraunces Tavern Museum, New York City**

Technology in Dallas and was also one of a handful of women to hold such a position. Like many women who have become museum directors, she was in the right place at the right time. "I was the assistant director when the director retired, and the board started a national search. I had been the education director, and had a very profit-making program with high media visibility. The board was impressed with my ability to manage successful programs and decided to promote from inside." Lewis, who has moved from Dallas to the directorship of the Louisiana Science Center in New Orleans, says, "For people with ambitions to move up in museums, it's important to excel at whatever level you're currently in. People in development and management are in good positions, since boards are thinking dollars and cents these days." Lewis got management training on her own. "I thought out what I needed after talking to my peers and to museum directors in the field and found credit and non-credit courses. I think management training should be part of a museum's staff development program. The board should see that staff has opportunities to attend seminars, courses, whatever is available that the museum can afford."

Museum management is becoming increasingly professionalized, and will continue to do so as the body of nonprofit management knowledge develops. Women museum directors say management training is a necessary concomitant to on-the-job experience for those who aspire to leadership positions. Margaret Shaeffer, director of the Jefferson County Historical Society in Watertown, New York, has been attending seminars on museum management "since the Year One. We learn the intricacies of the profession by attending these meetings—it's vital. You can't go

muddling through; the time you could is long past. You must be professional and have professionals working for you." Freda Nicholson buys new management books as they come on the market and says, "I still take courses whenever possible. You have to keep upgrading your skills. Earlier directors turned to their boards to develop operating plans and budgets. Now that board-staff responsibilities are being separated—as they should be—these administrative responsibilities are being turned back to the director."

Some professionals find it easier to understand and apply the theory of management after some practical working experience in the field. Courses on nonprofit management designed for the working professional were strongly recommended. Susan Stitt, director of the Museums at Stony Brook, New York, who has taken a night course in accounting and several ALI-ABA seminars on the legal aspects of museum administration, comments: "As an adult learner, I have very little time to commit to a prolonged course of study. I elect to do it when it is meaningful to me. We add layers to our skills as we need them." Christine Miles, director of Fraunces Tavern Museum in New York City, is a graduate of the George Washington University Museum Studies Program and has also taken management courses and seminars, including a program with Museums Collaborative, Inc., taught by faculty from the Columbia University Graduate School of Business. Miles is an advocate of specialized management training when the person is ready for it. "At 21, I wouldn't have had the faintest idea how to apply it. Now I know I can learn anything if it applies to something I want to accomplish."

Lynette Pohlman, director of the University Museums at Ames, Iowa, took classes in budgeting, accounting and personnel management at Iowa State University, and spent last summer in California at the Museum Management Institute. She describes the institute as "outstanding. It provides you with the tools and the philosophy. As a result, I've made major changes in the areas of personnel, planning, museum marketing, computer skills, ethics and working with my university museum advisory board."

Vicki B. Ford, director of the Canal Museum in Syracuse, New York, has completed work toward her MBA, and uses this management training in many areas of her job. "Marketing is the skill I use most, whether selling programs or programming ideas to my board, getting funds from a corporate donor, or getting publicity for my museum's programs. That and managing human resources are where I apply my management training most."

Few directors thought beginning professionals needed an MBA to attain leadership positions. Jan Muhlert, director of the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, thinks an MBA is overkill for a museum professional. She counsels would-be art museum directors: "Get as extensive an art history training as you can. Then get as much real work experience as you can in more than one area of museum



operations. Don't be too anxious to get the plum job—get different types of experience. You do need some formal management training. Look for opportunities to take some of the courses specifically tailored to museum management."

Management skills are not gained overnight. But women with ambitions to become directors can assertively seek opportunities to develop and broaden their administrative experience. These opportunities may be presented at every job level, even entrant positions. Cynthia Stone, director of Boston's Old South Meeting House, offers this advice to young professionals: "Be willing to work hard at every level. Get solid experience and build your reputation on that. Know yourself and what your skills are, so you know when you're ready to move on."

An enterprising individual can find opportunities to increase management skills outside the museum. Linda Lewis suggests: "If management training is not available at your current job level, volunteer community work gives you the opportunity to try out those skills. There's no danger of failing in your museum job, and it also gives you a chance to find out if you enjoy management."

Personal advancement is not the only, or the best, reason for a museum professional to become involved in the community. According to Freda Nicholson, "Community involvement is a key to successfully running a museum. The Science Museums of Charlotte are a business, and my business is to educate people. This would be as true if I ran an art museum. Unless a director is out there promoting his museum, he's not doing his job, which is to bring the best to the people in the community." Marilynne Eichinger, founder and director of Impression 5 Museum in Lansing, Michigan, concurs. "I have to talk to the corporate sector and market the museum. You have to be able to reach the business leaders in your community and teach them that museums and arts organizations are not charities; they're vital, producing members of the community."

The ability to integrate one's museum into community life, to guide it into a productive partnership with the community, is an important attribute of leadership, and one that is not often mentioned by museum professionals. But it may impress search committees more than management experience or scholarship. Search committees seek directors who have proven "people skills," the ability to work well with staff, boards, peers and community members. "Socially graceful," was how one search committee member defined this quality, emphasizing, "I don't mean a ladies' finishing school manner; I mean the ability to relate successfully to people of all educational backgrounds." Linda Sweet, executive vice president of Management Consultants for the Arts, Inc., describes the perfect candidate for a museum director as, "Someone with a superb combination of management and content plus the ability to work with people. The issue is leadership: the

ability to motivate others, foster compromise and be a facilitator."

A number of women directors currently heading small to medium-size museums appear to fit this description very well, but search committees seldom seek them out when a major museum needs a new director. "Chauvinism, preconceived notions and prejudice" are the reasons, admitted one male member of a search committee. "The boards of large institutions are male-dominated; they are clubs of male trustees." "They're still carrying some baggage," said another male search committee member.

Linda Sweet sees another relevant factor. "It's partly that women are coming from smaller museums. It is difficult to make this leap of faith, that if someone can handle an institution with a \$250,000 budget they can handle one with a \$2 million budget."

One search committee chairman thinks: "The forces of change have not dented the upper echelon, and this is to the detriment of the museum field, since you have to assume that half the talent is in the other half of the population." He described the ideal candidate as "one who has the maturity to accept the board's policies, carry them out, and be able to tell them not to go beyond their responsibilities." His committee sought a person with strong management training and had to raise its final salary offer by \$20,000 to attract the desired type of candidate. He had interviewed many art people who had become directors "casually, through their affinity for the arts. These people slid into management by accident. They did not meet our institution's needs."

The time is long past when directors could be institutional figureheads with little or no management experience. Administrative tasks can be delegated, but the ultimate responsibility for the management of the museum's physical and human resources is the director's. The director must therefore be thoroughly conversant with management principles and practice and have the ability to see that these are applied to all levels of museum operation.

All museum professionals of the coming generation with ambitions to become museum directors will be expected to have management skills and experience. Women may have the advantage of sheer numbers in that generation, but prejudice against women in leadership roles will linger on. Women must plan their career goals early and they must implement those goals by building management skills from entry level onward, grooming themselves for eventual executive positions by taking advantage of every opportunity to acquire the relevant experience and the breadth of knowledge required for museum leadership.

Younger women can find powerful role models among the current generation of women museum directors and executives. If women of the next generation become museum leaders, it will be in great part from the example provided by women museum professionals now working in the field.

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# A Citizen of the World

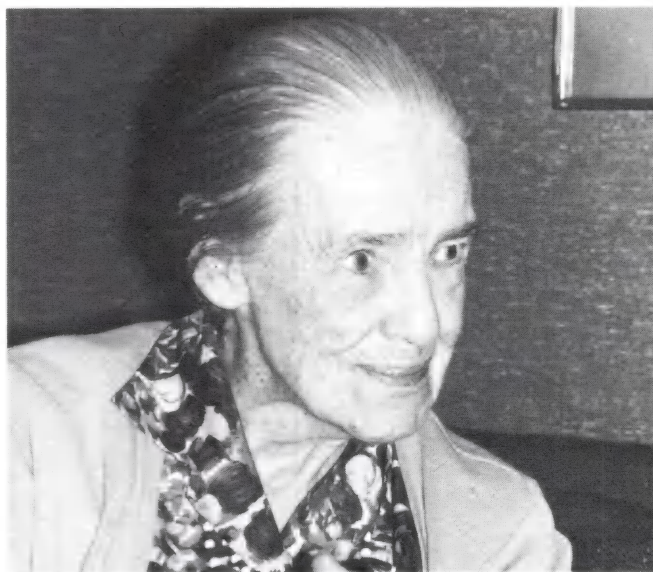
## The Museum Profession Honors Grace McCann Morley

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*Last June in Washington, D.C., the American Association of Museums honored Grace McCann Morley with the Award for Distinguished Service to Museums. The career of this remarkable woman has spanned seven decades. Today she is known for her devotion to the support of museums in developing nations, especially through her work as head of ICOM's Regional Agency in India.*

*At the award presentation during the AAM annual meeting, Paul N. Perrot, director of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and one of Grace Morley's many friends, described her career in the remarks reprinted here. Later, AAM publications editor Ellen Cochran Hicks talked with Morley about her education, her first museum job in Cincinnati and her years as director of the San Francisco Museum of Art. The four anecdotes on these pages were culled from their conversation.*

*As she accepted her award, Grace Morley issued an invitation marked by a characteristic spark of wry humor. "If you're ever in Delhi," she said, "look me up. I'm in the phone book." Only she could*



*make it sound so simple.*

*(Editor's note: As this issue went to press, we learned that Grace Morley died on January 8 in New Delhi at the age of 84.)*

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In honoring Grace McCann Morley, the American Association of Museums is recognizing a lifetime of devotion and contribution to the ideas and ideals that are at the root of what our profession is or should be.

She joins, through the token of this medal, four other great contributors to our profession: Albert Eide Parr, Edgar Preston Richardson, Frank Oppenheimer and Edward P. Alexander. Each in his own unique way has broadened the horizons of our profession and illuminated an aspect of our collective mission.

In her we first recognize the scholar who received a bachelor's and master's degree from the University of her native California in 1924 and a doctorate from the University of Paris in 1926. That early and constructive contact with a foreign land was to play an important role in determining her future course.

Having completed this first stage of her studies and travels, she returned to become an instructor in French

literature and art history at Goucher College, becoming the chief curator of the Cincinnati Art Museum in 1930. In 1934 she became director of the San Francisco Museum of Art. It was a critical year for the museum, as it was moving to new, expanded quarters and much broader programs. Under her direction it became a major center for the presentation of contemporary creativity, American and foreign, local and national. The innumerable exhibitions of paintings, watercolors and sculptures, for which she wrote thoughtful introductions, testify to a vitality and breath of vision that encompassed the world. And indeed, she has become a citizen of the world, and her trustees recognized this when they generously gave her leave to take charge of the Arts of the Pacific Coast of Latin America section of the San Francisco International Exposition of 1939 and to direct Pacific House.

In 1941, under the aegis of the U.S. Department of State, she traveled to South America to prepare a series of ex-



change exhibitions, and in 1946 she left again to serve on the Preparatory Commission of UNESCO, formally taking a leave of absence a year later to be the first head of UNESCO's Museum Division, joining a small group of less than 50 professionals bent on laying the foundation for a new order. In that role from 1947 to 1949 she established principles which have superbly survived political turmoil and bureaucratic obfuscation.

Grace Morley was not only present, but intimately involved in the creation of ICOM, helping to develop the basis for the international, professional cooperation envisioned by those fellow pioneers: Chauncey Hamlin, Georges Henri Riviere, Philip Hendy and Julian Huxley. With them and others, she was the creator of *Museum*, the first publication devoted to the presentation of basic museological principles and their applications in developed and developing countries.

Having established those foundations, she returned to San Francisco and remained the distinguished director of the art museum until 1958. Under her leadership, the museum grew, and as she stated in the 1957 report: "the Museum presented every aspect of contemporary art, examined at intervals its background, origins and antecedents, and, always emphasizing standards, brought the best and most important in contemporary production to San Francisco. Contemporary art, worldwide in its development, influence, and relationships, draws on the heritage of every place and time for inspiration and sources."

In 1958, she returned to foreign duties and in 1959 her attainments as administrator and humanist brought her to the National Museum of New Delhi, which she directed until 1966, continuing to serve the Indian government as special advisor for museums until 1968. These were unusual honors to be afforded a foreigner. They recognized a vast knowledge of museum practices and even more an ability to share this knowledge with understanding and sensitivity.

In 1968, Grace retired once more. As a founder of the ICOM Regional Agency in Asia, and its head from 1967 to 1978, she established the agency's first office in New Delhi, fulfilling the mandate that with the founders of ICOM she had foreseen decades earlier: to provide professional guidance and, wherever possible, physical assistance to colleagues who were seeking better ways to protect their priceless heritage and share it in a more imaginative way with populations who were beginning to see in their cultural heritage the testimony of an important past, essential for their newly found sense of nationhood.

She had traveled extensively in Europe and Latin America in preparation for the Golden State International Exposition of 1939 and later as U.S. commissioner to the São Paulo Biennale, but it was in the Far East that her heart and mind focused, and it is perhaps there that her influence has radiated most effectively. Through countless trips, often under the most difficult circumstances and with the

meagerest of resources, she disseminated knowledge, but more important conveyed to our colleagues that, no matter how far and different are our cultural backgrounds, resources and surroundings, the museum profession has one common task: to interpret to the present and preserve for future generations the past creativity of humanity and the testimony of this planet's evolution.

In this task, no place was too far or difficult for her to reach nor were the linguistic barriers sufficient to prevent her teaching from spreading. But this was not a one-way flow! Through the friendships she made, she became the interpreter of far-off wisdoms that have fertilized our own thinking and made us see more clearly that the museums of developed, affluent countries cannot prosper in isolation. She taught us that we of the West have an obligation to share our knowledge and our resources in order to assist emerging nations in the enormous task of protecting their patrimony and making it meaningful to populations who, more often than not, are confronted with the challenge of daily survival.

It was alleged in 1978 that Morley was retiring and indeed she did in her official role at ICOM's Asia Agency. But what sort of retirement is it that in the last three years, among other countries, has taken her to Japan, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Korea, Indonesia, to Pakistan six times, Nepal, and three times to China lecturing, advising, observing and sharing?

To all of this activity, we must add the products of an indefatigable pen. Her writings have ranged from her thesis on the *Sensitivity of the French toward Nature in the First Half of the 17th Century*, to countless essays on museum management and the profoundly ethical meaning of our profession, to introductions of exhibition catalogs, and an extraordinarily informative and rich private correspondence (the pride of her friends' personal files), culminating with her latest work: *Masterpieces of India Sculpture*, now in press.

In giving you this token of its admiration, the American Association of Museums joins with pride those institutions and governments that have recognized her unique merits: the Royal Society of Arts, of which you are a life Fellow; Mills College, which gave her an honorary doctorate of law in 1937; the California College of Arts and Crafts, a doctorate of fine arts in 1956; Smith College, a doctorate in humane letters in 1957; the University of California, a doctorate of law in 1958; the French government, which bestowed the order of Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur in 1949, and the Government of India, the Padma Bhustan decoration in 1982.

Indeed, we are not honoring Grace Morley. She has honored her profession by her deeds, this association by being a loyal member over 50 years and her colleagues by being a generous friend.

Paul N. Perrot



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## The Beginning of a Museum Career

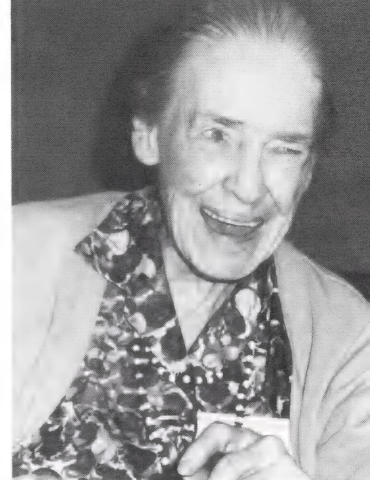
I had taken my B.A. with a double major in ancient Greek and French, took my M.A. in French, with the idea of getting my doctorate at the University of Paris, which I did. Then I went back home and started hunting for a job. I wrote colleges and universities all over the country, more or less, and finally got an offer from Goucher College to be instructor in advanced French literature and conversation. I was there three years, and in the middle the one professor of art died suddenly and something had to be done about art, so the classics professor — Greek and Latin — took those periods and I took on from the Middle Ages to the 19th century.

Meanwhile, the American Institute of Architects was very worried because they thought the instruction in art in the smaller colleges of the United States was inadequate. The only place where it was done well was in the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard, under Paul Sachs. So they set up a summer course at Harvard and the reward from the college, to get you to go, was a \$200 book fee. So I took it, and the man who was in charge of it, Walter Siple, toward the end of that period accepted an appointment as director of the Cincinnati Art Museum when it got its first donation of Old Masters. He invited me to join him as his general curator.

I tried to get Harvard to let me take another doctorate with Paul Sachs, with the tremendously interesting course that he gave in connoisseurship, but they wouldn't do it. They don't allow multiple doctorates in the United States, so I was defeated there. I was very sorry because I discovered that I had the gift for handling museum objects and cared more about that than anything else. That's why I haven't done much writing. I've done a tremendous amount of writing, but it's not the kind of scholarly research writing for the most part that you attribute to art historians in universities.

In my time, when I was at the University of California [as an undergraduate], we didn't think the art course was worth the time of a serious student. Nowhere except in the Fogg [was art history considered a serious subject]. There was a great wave of museum directors that went out [from the Fogg course] all over the country. It was a very exciting time, I realize in retrospect.

And strangely enough, I began to be a little superstitious. My first job [in Cincinnati] was to catalog a collection of Kashmiri shawls, and my second job a collection of Indian color prints that had been gathered by a very wealthy Cincinnati family somewhere toward the middle of the 19th century. That was a first. Only in the Victoria and Albert Museum had anything been done with Kashmiri shawls at that time in the western world. Scholarship has gone a long way in this country and in my lifetime, like technology.



*Grace McCann Morley, June 1984*

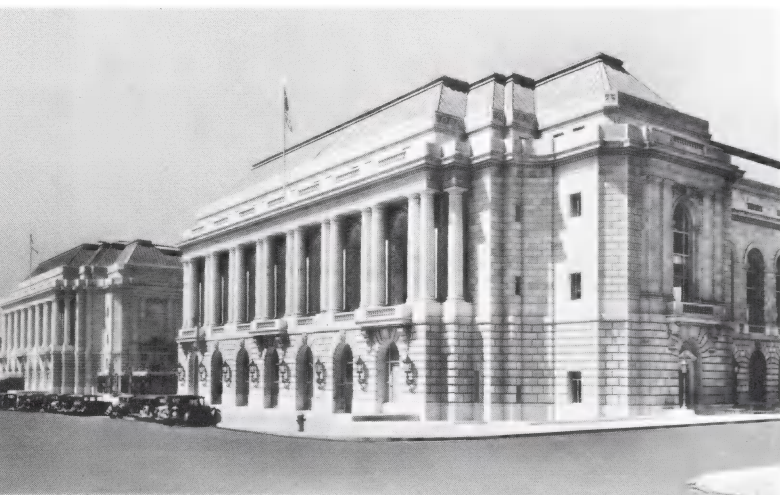
## Early Days at the San Francisco Museum of Art

The San Francisco Museum of Art, which was a survivor of the Panama Pacific Exposition of 1915, was in the process of trying to find someone to lead it [when I moved to California in the early 1930s]. They didn't call the person a director at that time, in the beginning.

The War Memorial of San Francisco had just been completed and consisted then of the Opera House and the Veterans' Building. The city of San Francisco had to call on the veterans' organizations, which were very active after the First World War, to help in getting a bond issue through in order to pay for the War Memorial, and on the grounds of that the veterans took over three floors, leaving the museum with one. The museum was on the top floor, with beautiful galleries. We opened in January 1935, and a few months after the opening, I had the title of director, because it was more practical.

At that time, it had 98 very good, very first-rate French prints, one very bad Old Master, and one very doubtful something or other. I never did have time to work that out, while I was there. That was all. We had the premises supported by the city with two janitors to keep it clean and an elevator operator. We also had a grant from the city of





*The San Francisco Museum of Art in 1937. Then, as now, the museum shares space with various organizations and occupies the upper floors of the War Memorial of San Francisco.*

\$15,000 a year, which was a tremendous amount of money in those days, for exhibitions, no funds at all for purchase.

We gradually were able to avoid the exhibitions that were pressed upon us, that had no value, and have exhibitions that were background. There were good artists in San Francisco in those days, but they hadn't traveled very much. It was hard to travel then. So they didn't know, and the public knew even less, about modern art. Sometimes [their reaction] was violent, but we insinuated very, very avant-garde things, small exhibitions among some historic ones—the evolution of landscape painting, for instance, from medieval manuscripts straight on through impressionism and postimpressionism.

Very soon after the museum opened we got a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York to do a three-year course on art appreciation, but it was very different from a college course. We broke the first year into three sections of 50 persons each and each section met once a week, two were evenings. We were unusual also in our opening hours. We were open at 12 noon and remained open until 10 at night on weekdays and Sunday 1 to 5. The reason for that was we were close to the Opera House, and people would come in before concerts. We were not far from the principal movie section of San Francisco on Market Street and people would come in from there.

So we ran these two evening courses and one afternoon course on techniques. People are fascinated by how things are done, how things are made. So we got outstanding artists of the community to illustrate all the techniques of art creation. After the demonstration/lecture by a practitioner of art, we had tables laid out with the media that the artists had demonstrated and all the people sat down and worked for half an hour to an hour, if they cared to stay as long as that. So they got the feel in their hands of what making art is.

## The Wartime Museum

One day [in the years] soon after the museum opened I was there at about 6 o'clock when the public had mostly thinned out. A young man with his hair standing on end, a very tall, thin young man, asked to come in and see me. He said, You know my brother and I own some works of art that are being shown in the Museum of Modern Art [in New York]. Now we're both located in Berkeley, and we would very much like to bring them here. Do you think your trustees would allow us to let you have them to use in any way you like, for fill-in exhibitions or permanent exhibitions? And I said, Well, let me find out. It was Robert Oppenheimer.

When the war came, I knew he had left Berkeley. He was at Los Alamos, of course, and I didn't know where he was but I knew that by writing to a certain address, my letter would be forwarded. Well, a great many of the people who by then had begun collecting in San Francisco, accepted my offer to send things to the interior of the country for safety. We chose Colorado Springs and Denver, and I wrote to him and said, People are asking me to put their things into safety. Should I send your things away? And the answer came back, No, we think it's more important to have them there, the principal port to ship out the troops to the Pacific. And it's true, these young men came in and took a last look at great art. It was a very moving sort of thing.

[Soon after Pearl Harbor], the city authorities, of course, wanted to black out the museum at night. That would have

*The 1945, when the War Memorial became the headquarters of world communications for the U.S. armed services, Morley packed up her galleries and moved the museum to a temporary storefront location at 441 Post Street.*





meant closing the museum, so we got busy and blacked out the top—they were top-lighted galleries—and we were able to use some galleries at night, and we put out coffee and cookies for servicemen.

[Later] during the war, the War Memorial wasn't used for a museum; it was a headquarters of world communication with the United States armed services. We had to move the collection out. But we were committed to sign up for exhibitions years in advance, even then, so we were committed to any number of exhibitions coming from different parts of the United States. I persuaded the trustees finally to consent to our taking an unoccupied shop right next to the St. Francis Hotel. We did some very good shows. They were well patronized.

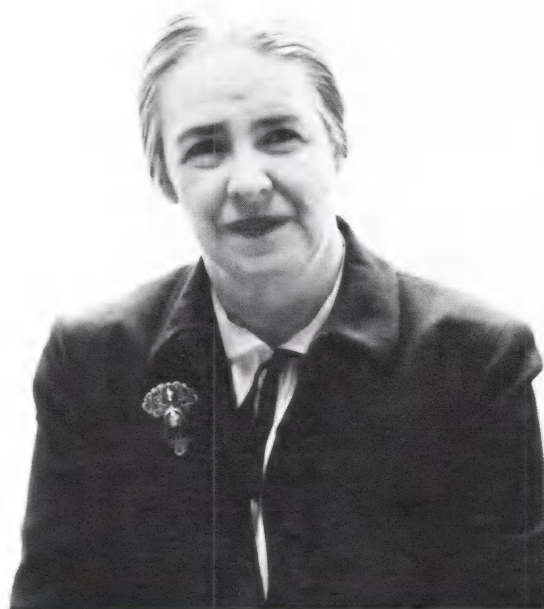


## Saving WPA Murals

There was a very interesting episode in relation to the 1945 meeting in San Francisco to found the United Nations. Anton Refregier, an artist who was quite famous, did murals [under the auspices of the WPA] for the Rincon Annex post office in San Francisco, which at that time was a principal post office. He finished off with a panel on the UN meeting and he represented the four great powers.

The veterans' organizations, who'd never seen the mural in color, decided that the artist, who was acknowledged as a leftist, had put asses' ears on the American [in the painting], but actually it was the drapery behind the podium. You could see that in color.

Well, the politicians wanted to destroy all the murals, which showed the history of San Francisco and were very, very fine. So Tom Howe [director of the California Palace of the Legion of Honor], Walter Heil [director of the M. H. deYoung Museum] and I organized a campaign sending letters to all our colleagues in the Association of Art Museum Directors throughout the country saying that we must resist the destruction on political grounds of any artwork done during the WPA days or in any other connection. And Tom Howe, because he was a man, was sent to Washington to one of those congressional committee meetings, and we won the case [to save the Rincon Annex murals]. Δ



*Grace McCann Morley in the 1950s, as director of the San Francisco Museum of Art. During her tenure, Morley organized a campaign to save WPA works of art from destruction, and along with Frank Lloyd Wright, Marcel Duchamp and other artists, critics and literary figures participated in the Western Roundtable on Modern Art held at the museum.*



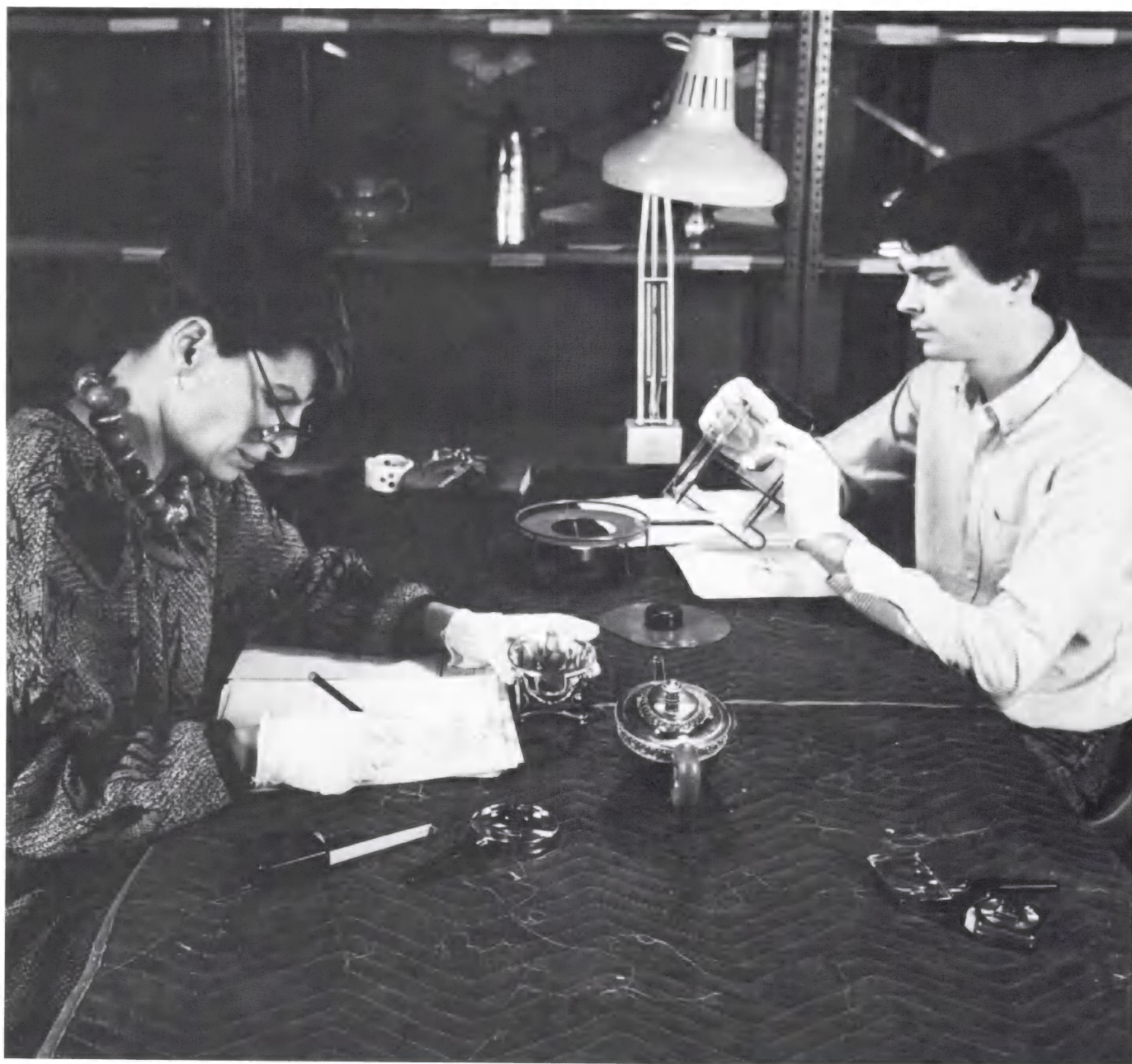
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# A Code of Ethics for Registrars

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*Introduction by Cordelia Rose*

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In recent years, the job of the museum registrar has been changing dramatically. Registrars once had the relatively simple task of keeping accession books and issuing numbers. Backdating gifts was almost the only area in which they could compromise themselves. Today, however, the responsibilities of registrars are a complex combination of information management; expertise in the care, handling, packing and transportation of objects; risk management; knowledge of legal, fiscal, conservation, installation and security matters; and administration of policy and procedure. Thus registrars are involved in ever-increasing areas of potential ethical compromise.

As yet there is no formal training for registrars, although many museology courses now include relevant material. Many registrars learn on the job. Situations arise in which guidelines would help to compensate for this lack of formal training.

Since the Registrars Committee of the American Association of Museums was founded in 1976, one of its prime concerns has been the promotion of professionalism among registrars. To address this concern, a Professional Practices Subcommittee was formed and asked by the executive board to establish standards of performance and procedure for registrars. Barbara Chandler, Linda Thomas and Ellen Myette worked on the subcommittee, which presented its working draft on professional practices to the committee in 1979.

While the subcommittee prepared its draft, the AAM Committee on Ethics produced *Museum Ethics*, published by the AAM in 1978. In light of this important publication, the executive board of the Registrars Committee decided that a code of ethics for registrars was needed to amplify *Museum Ethics* and to address the particular concerns of registrars. Publication of such a code would make museum professionals and others in related fields aware of particular problems and act as an aid to their solution.

In 1982 the executive board asked the Professional Practices Subcommittee to produce a code of ethics for registrars. Since then curators have completed and approved their own *Code of Ethics for Curators*, published in *MUSEUM NEWS* (February 1983), which follows the form of *Museum Ethics*. For clarity's sake, it seemed sensible to base the registrars' code on the same model, following *Museum Ethics* in form and the original Professional Practices Subcommittee report in content. The procedural aspects of museum registration are well described in Dudley and Wilkinson's *Museum Registration Methods*; the *Code of Ethics for Registrars* concentrates on quality of performance rather than on procedure.

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CORDELIA ROSE is registrar at Cooper-Hewitt Museum, the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Design in New York City. She was chair of the Professional Practices Subcommittee of the AAM Registrars Committee during 1982-84 and is now vice-chair of the Registrars Committee.

This code reflects the valuable contributions of the 1982-84 subcommittee, chaired by Cordelia Rose, registrar, Cooper-Hewitt Museum, New York City. The members were Katherine Jones, Bureau of Archeological Research, Department of State, Florida; Virginia Mann, senior registrar, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; and Steven Rogers, museum registrar, Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona, Tucson. Their varied disciplines and interests led to lively discussion concerning the needs and common practices of disparate museums.

The Registrars Committee membership reviewed the first draft; their comments were taken into consideration and many were incorporated into a second draft. The first draft was also sent to registrars at specialized museums, in case there were particular concerns that members of the subcommittee had not addressed. In addition, the first draft was sent to curators and conservators to identify direct conflicts that their own codes of ethics had not covered.

The second draft was reviewed by Alan D. Ullberg and Marie C. Malaro, Office of the General Counsel, Smithsonian Institution, and by Nancy Akre, editor, Cooper-

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### **The job of the museum registrar has been changing dramatically.**

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Hewitt Museum. The final draft benefits from their wise and generously given advice.

The final draft was approved by the executive board of the Registrars Committee. It was then mailed to the members of the committee and presented at the committee's business meeting during the AAM's annual meeting in Washington, D.C. The members accepted and endorsed this code of ethics on June 11, 1984.

The subcommittee views the statements in this code as general guidelines for registrars. The code will be useful in the development of policies and procedures in individual museums. When there are differences of opinion within an institution about certain practices, registrars may cite the code to reinforce their position.

In order to promote further professionalism among registrars, the 1984-86 Professional Practices Subcommittee's mandate is to produce sets of standards that should be maintained in different areas, such as the responsibilities of couriers. As the shortcomings of the *Code of Ethics for Registrars* become apparent, and as specific concerns or situations are identified, the subcommittee may address them. The subcommittee and executive board may also help registrars placed in unethical situations evaluate their positions and offer advice until legal counsel is deemed necessary.

The Registrars Committee offers this code in the hope that it will provide the necessary guidelines for registrars as they continue to establish themselves as professionals.



## Introduction

The authors of this *Code of Ethics for Registrars* acknowledge their indebtedness to *Museum Ethics* (American Association of Museums, 1978), and endorse that report as a statement of basic principles applicable to the ethical issues faced in common by all museum professionals. This *Code of Ethics for Registrars* has been developed to apply similar ethical principles to the specific activities and responsibilities of museum registrars.\*

The Registrars Committee of the American Association of Museums accepted and endorsed this *Code of Ethics for Registrars* on June 11, 1984.

## Description of the Position

Individuals with the title or function of registrar have a varied range of responsibilities and activities. In this document the basic description of the position as defined in the glossary of *Museum Registration Methods* is adopted: "an individual with broad responsibilities in the development and enforcement of policies and procedures pertaining to the acquisition, management and disposition of collections. Records pertaining to the objects for which the institution has assumed responsibility are maintained by the registrar. Usually, the registrar also handles arrangements for accessions, loans, packing, shipping, storage, customs and insurance as it relates to museum material."

Registrars are usually specialists in the areas of information management, risk management and logistics. The primary concerns of registrars are creating and maintaining accurate records pertaining to objects, including those documents that provide legal protection for their museum; ensuring the safety of objects; arranging insurance coverage for objects; and handling, transporting and control of objects.

## The Registrar, the Records and the Objects

Registrars' obligations to their museums' collections, to loaned objects

and to the associated records are paramount.

## Management, Maintenance and Preservation of the Records

The records and documents that form a body of information pertaining to the collections and loaned objects are the responsibility of registrars and are the cornerstone of the registrarial function.

The records comprise legal documents establishing ownership or loan status of objects: records of accession, location, donor or vendor, exhibition and publication. They may also include photographs, licenses and permits, exhibition bond notices and historical records. Frequently, curators keep research files on the objects in their domain.

Registrars must maintain records that are meticulously complete, honest, orderly, retrievable and current. Records should be created in a timely manner and accurately dated. Records must be stored in an archivally and technologically sound and secure manner, both to ensure their preservation and to prevent access by unauthorized persons. The expertise of legal counsel and archivists should be sought without hesitation.

Registrars must protect their museums and the objects in them against the risk of liability through the use of valid documents such as gift, sales, loan and custody forms and receipts; by implementing all aspects of insurance coverage for owned or borrowed objects on premises or in transit according to the terms of their insurance policy or indemnity; and by complying with pertinent laws and regulations governing such things as import and export or other movement of objects, or rights and reproductions of objects.

Registrars, through the records maintained, are accountable for the objects in the custody of their museums and must be able to provide current information on each object, its location, status and condition.

## Management, Maintenance and Conservation of the Objects

In maintenance and physical care of the collections, registrars must work in close cooperation with curators, conservators, collections managers and other museum staff, and must be guided by

their museums' collections management policies. In management of loaned objects registrars also work in cooperation with exhibitions, technical and security staff, and they must adhere to and enforce the lenders' conditions of loan.

In some museums it is not registrars but curators or collections managers who have responsibility for the physical care of collections in storage. Whichever is the case, the best and most secure environment possible should be ensured for the storage and preservation of objects. The condition of the collections should be reviewed periodically and the expertise of conservators should be sought without hesitation.

Objects in movement are the responsibility of registrars. As risk managers, registrars are responsible for determining and arranging for the correct methods of handling, packing, transporting and couriers objects. They must also consider borrowers' capabilities and facilities. Registrars identify potential risks and complications and act to reduce or eliminate them.

Registrars share the responsibilities for loaned objects in the custody of their museums. They are responsible for their safe movement, temporary storage and correct disposition. Registrars always must treat loaned objects of whatever value, quality or type with the same care and respect given to objects in their museums' collections.

Registrars must complete condition reports in an honest and timely manner, be familiar with the terms of their insurance coverage and ensure that insurance reporting is accurate. In filing an insurance claim all relevant circumstances of loss or damage must be disclosed, even if it appears that the museum is at fault.

## Acquisition and Disposal

Registrars must adhere to the acquisition and disposal policies of their museums; if no written policies exist, then registrars should encourage and assist in their formulation. In the absence of written museum policies registrars should develop written procedures for use by their departments to ensure compliance with traditional but oral museum policies. Registrars should obtain the approval of their directors before implementing such procedures,

\*The term "museum" is used throughout but includes institutions with similar functions with respect to objects, such as traveling exhibition organizations.



and strive to ensure that the policies and procedures are complied with at all levels within their museums.

Objects for acquisition or disposal are proposed, usually by curators, to the relevant museum committees for approval. Registrars' roles in acquisition are generally in an advisory capacity concerning the feasibility of storage, the risk of movement to the object under consideration and certain legal aspects of the transaction. Prior to issuing an accession number reflecting the date and/or order in which the object was added to the collection, registrars are responsible for obtaining documentation of the decision to acquire the object, the document transferring title of an object to the museum, and the receipt of delivery of an object. Registrars should be aware of, and not contribute to, the violation of tax, wildlife, import or other laws and regulations governing acquisition of objects by their museums and other institutions with which they are involved.

Registrars should ensure that at least one appraisal of an object is acquired and institute insurance coverage if applicable according to museum policy. In order to prevent their use as an appraisal for tax or other purposes, these appraisals should not be made available to the donor or vendor of an object. Appraisals for tax purposes are the responsibility of the donor, who can be informed whether an object is accepted for the collection, for sale or for use by the museum.

Registrars' roles in deaccessions and disposals are primarily those of monitoring and documenting procedures. Registrars also should bring to the attention of the curator any object in irreparable condition or one jeopardizing the safety of the rest of the collections. Registrars should verify the museum's legal right to dispose of an object, and inform the curator and other appropriate museum staff of any restrictions attached to an object that may bear on its disposition. When restrictions are attached to an object, legal counsel should be sought so the museum might be relieved of those restrictions by appropriate negotiation or legal procedure.

Once all the proper approvals have been granted, registrars must amend all the related records to show the date of

deaccession, the authority for it and the method of disposal. Records may also show the disposition of any funds realized through sale or any exchange acquired as a result of the deaccession. Donor credit for, and use of funds realized through, the sale of an object must comply with the policies of the museum.

### ***Availability of Collections and Records***

Museums hold and safeguard their collections for posterity, although they must allow reasonable public access to them on a nondiscriminatory basis. However, registrars must act according to the policies of their museums.

Registrars, along with curators and conservators, must ensure that objects from the collections are examined and viewed in a manner not detrimental to an object. They must also ascertain that a borrowing institution's facilities are acceptable when considering a loan request, so that an object will not be placed in jeopardy.

The records constitute part of a museum's accountability to the public. However, registrars must ensure by proper supervision that sensitive or confidential material in their museums' records is not accessible to unauthorized persons. When in doubt registrars should consult their supervisors or their museums' legal counsel.

### ***Truth in Presentation***

Registrars are responsible for creating and maintaining accurate records and updating them in light of new research, and for ensuring that the records reflect the facts insofar as they are known.

### ***Human Remains and Sacred Objects***

Registrars must be tactful and responsible in giving access to collections of human remains and sacred objects, and must store, transport and care for these objects in a manner acceptable to the profession and to peoples of various beliefs.

### ***The Registrar as Staff Member***

#### ***General Department***

Registrars are visible to the public, the profession, commercial representatives

and government agents in situations ranging from collecting objects from donors and lenders in their homes or museums to negotiating with customs inspectors in cargo sheds. Registrars must behave in a dignified and ethical manner and gain the respect of others by not creating embarrassments either to their museum or their profession. Because of their access to confidential matters and information, it is incumbent upon registrars to be discrete and circumspect in all their communications or actions in an effort to preserve the integrity of their museum.

In all activities and statements, registrars must make it clear whether they are speaking for their museums, their professional association or themselves. They must be aware that any museum-related action may reflect upon their museums, be attributed to it or reflect upon the integrity of the profession as a whole.

### ***Conflict of Interest***

Registrars must be governed by their museums' policies on conflict of interest and other ethical matters.

Registrars should be loyal to their museums and not abuse their official position or contacts within the museum community, nor act so as to impair in any way the performance of their official duties, compete with their museums, or bring discredit or embarrassment to any museum or the profession in any activity, museum-related or not.

### ***Responsibility to the Collections and Other Museum Property***

Registrars and their staff must never receive or purchase for their own or another individual's collections or purposes, even at public auction, objects deaccessioned from their museums' collections. Registrars' volunteers and interns should be guided by the codes governing their supervisors.

Registrars should never put to personal use objects in their museums' custody and they should guard information that would enable others to do so. Registrars must never abuse their access to information and to other museum assets by using them to personal advantage. Registrars must be particu-



larly vigilant concerning their knowledge of museum security procedures.

Because of their experience and responsibility as risk managers, registrars are often regarded as authorities in the care and transport of valuable or problematical objects. They must guard against giving the impression that their museums endorse the services of any specific vendor or supplier.

When recommending the services of conservators, appraisers, packers, shippers, customs brokers or others, whenever possible registrars should offer the names of three qualified vendors to avoid favoritism in recommendations.

### ***Personal Collecting and Dealing***

Registrars must be governed by the policies of their museums which usually are designed for curators and directors. If at the time of their employment their personal collections are similar to those of their museums, registrars should submit an inventory of their collections to the appropriate official and update this inventory in a timely manner. As to objects they acquire after they are employed, registrars may be required to give the museum the opportunity to purchase such objects at their acquisition cost for an appropriate period of time. In no case should registrars compete with their museums in any personal collecting activity. They should never act as dealers or for dealers.

### ***Outside Employment and Consulting***

In any situation where registrars work for another organization, an individual or themselves on their own time, such work should not interfere with the performance of registrars' duties for their museums. The nature of the employment should be disclosed to and cleared by their director and should conform to their museums' relevant personnel policy.

### ***Gifts, Favors, Discounts and Dispensations***

Registrars often use the services of commercial companies. They must not accept gifts of more than a trifling nature, such as unsolicited advertising or promotional material, so that their judgment will not be impaired when

selecting a vendor. Such selections should be made upon merit and not for personal reasons or obligations.

Registrars must not accept personal discounts from vendors who do business with their museums. Registrars must also avoid any appearance of being influenced by gifts or dispensations provided by vendors of services.

### ***Teaching, Lecturing, Writing and Other Creative Activities***

Registrars should teach, lecture, write and perform related professional activities for the benefit of others in the profession or those aspiring to such a position. They should also contribute to the general public understanding of museum registration.

Registrars should enhance their own knowledge in all registration matters, ensuring that they are up to date with current methods of records management, objects care and handling, packing, transporting, insurance, personnel and financial management, as well as changes in the laws affecting museums and their collections.

Registrars should obtain the approval of their director and conform to their museums' policies on questions of use of official time, royalties and other remuneration for such activities.

### ***Field Studies and Collecting***

Because legal and ethical problems can arise more frequently in fieldwork, registrars must be particularly zealous in completing accurate and timely records. Registrars must monitor compliance with local, state, national and international laws, as well as with their museums' acquisitions policies. They must also be sensitive to ethnic or religious beliefs.

### ***The Registrar and Museum Management Policy***

#### ***Professionalism***

Although the governing board of the museum is ultimately responsible for the museum, the director is the chief executive officer.

Registrars must carry out their duties according to established guidelines and under the directions of their supervisors, who may be the director, the assistant director or curator of collections, or an administrative manager.

In no case should they take direction from members of the governing board, who should confine their directives to the chief executive officer of the museum. If guidelines or delegations of authority are unclear registrars should seek written clarification.

Registrars should not be required to reverse, alter or suppress their professional judgment to conform to a management decision.

When a disagreement arises between the registrar and the director or other supervisor, the registrar should consider documenting the difference of opinion, but should also conform to the grievance procedures of the museum. Only when asked to falsify records or in some way compromise legal or ethical standards should the registrar consider writing a report to the governing board of the museum, and then only with the full knowledge of the museum director.

### ***Interpersonal Relationships and Intermuseum Cooperation***

While registrars must strive for excellence in registration methods, they should understand that professional role within the total context of their museum and should act cooperatively and constructively with colleagues in the furtherance of their museums' goals and purposes. It is important for registrars to obtain the respect and trust of colleagues in their own and other museums.

Intermuseum cooperation may take the form of providing safe storage for duplicate sets of collections records, of providing the services of conservation or preparation of objects for transport, of consolidation of shipments or safe storage for traveling exhibitions between sites. Such cooperation may also take the form of providing professional help and temporary storage of objects or records in the event of fire, flood or other disaster. When objects or records are so taken into their museums' custody, registrars should ensure that valid documentation of the terms and duration of the custody arrangements is provided. Δ

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For a reading list designed to complement the *Code of Ethics for Registrars*, see *Registrar*, no. 2 (Winter 1984): pp. 7-13.



# Taking a Hard Look

## Strategies for Self-Study in Museums

*Suzanne Schell*

A museum has just hired a new director and the board of trustees has given her a mandate to change the direction of the institution.

An established museum would like to assess its accomplishments, refine its mission, and set new goals and objectives.

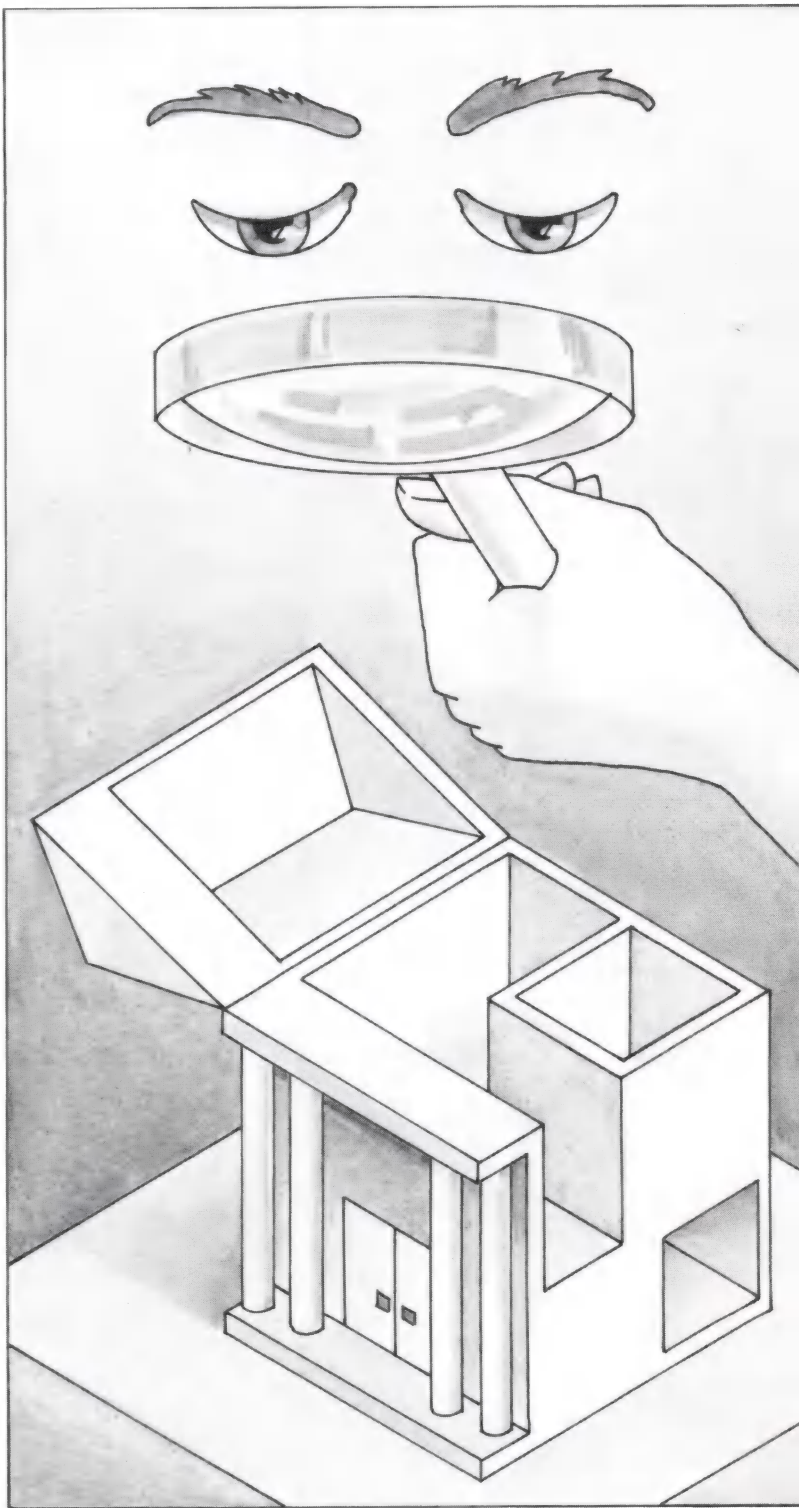
- Facing budget cutbacks, a museum needs to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs in order to establish priorities for its limited resources.
- A museum undergoing reorganization seeks to articulate its purpose, establish goals, and develop a long-range financial and program plan.

What do these institutions have in common? Each might need a self-study to help plan for the future.

A self-study helps focus an institution and enables it to prepare for both internal and external change. It is a form of self-renewal, necessary to a museum's continuing vitality. Self-study provides an opportunity to step back from the pressure of day-to-day business and examine some fundamental questions: Why was the museum established and what is its present purpose? What has it accomplished in the past and what is it doing now? Who are its audiences and how well is it serving them? What are its goals and why? How will it achieve those goals and what resources are needed?

The concept of self-study was borrowed from the academic world where it is an integral part of the accredita-

SUZANNE SCHELL is a museum consultant who lives in Reston, Virginia. She was the program officer at the National Endowment for the Humanities responsible for administering 21 state historical society self-study grants awarded in 1977. In 1982, NEH contracted with her to write a report on this program. This article is based on the report and is adapted from a presentation at the 1984 AAM annual meeting. (Editor's Note: Through its Humanities Projects in Museums and Historical Organizations Program, NEH continues to award grants for self-study projects to evaluate resources for public programs in the humanities.)





tion process for colleges and universities. The library and archives fields also have valuable models. In the museum profession, the AAM's Accreditation and Museum Assessment programs are parallels to self-study. The application processes for challenge grants from the National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities and for general operating support grants from the Institute of Museum Services include self-study components. Finally, there are precedents for self-study in management theory on organizational development, management-by-objective, and long-range and strategic planning.

Self-study has many uses and benefits for an institution. It stimulates the planning process that is so essential to good management and good programs. It is a tool for involving staff and trustees in planning and decision making. It encourages them to work together by establishing new channels of communication and mechanisms for periodic review. A self-study may give a director the leverage to convince trustees of needed programs and resources. If it encompasses financial planning, self-study can be used as the basis for fund raising to launch a capital campaign. It can also stimulate new directions for programs. Externally, self-study can establish greater credibility for a museum. Both the public and funding agencies respect an institution that is willing to look critically at itself.

## Timing for a Self-Study

When should a museum undertake a self-study? The most obvious answer is that there must first be a perceived need. Simply stated, an institution is ready for a self-study when it has been doing its work long enough to merit evaluation, when there is a need for change, when there is a problem to be resolved, or when it is necessary to redirect programs and resources. For a self-study to be effective, the organization's governing body, administration and staff must agree about the need for self-analysis. Equally important, everyone must be committed to follow through on the recommendations. If there is no desire to use the results to implement changes, the self-study at best will be ignored or at worst may be destructive.

All institutions have life cycles of growth, stabilization and decline. Although there is no pat formula, most organizations should undergo a self-study approximately every five years. While theoretically a museum should be able to undertake such an evaluation at any time, certain factors seem to be conducive or discouraging.

Perhaps the most propitious time is during a change of leadership or a period of transition. Self-study often is precipitated by external factors such as changes in the economy or technology.

Other times seem inauspicious. Some administrators contend that self-study should not be conducted during a time of stress or strife when it can take on investigative overtones or become a witch-hunt. It is debatable whether

an institution experiencing reorganization or financial problems should undertake a self-study. Although potentially more threatening during a time of budget cuts, self-study is one way to involve people in making the difficult decisions that will affect them.

It is essential to remember that self-study is not a panacea. In particular, it should not be used to solve leadership or personnel problems because this hidden agenda may backfire. Self-study also is inappropriate when an institution wants a "whitewash" to affirm the status quo. By its very nature, self-study involves risks and raises questions that may open a Pandora's box for an organization that is not serious about addressing problems and making changes.

## Scope and Perspective

The scope of a self-study depends on whether the museum needs a massive overhaul or fine tuning. It is arguable that the broader the scope of the self-study, the greater its ultimate value to the organization.

A self-study—like any planning for the future—should take place within the context of the museum's history. A historical examination enables the organization to better understand how it has evolved and can serve as a means for developing institutional consensus on recommendations for the future.

A self-study often starts as a programmatic evaluation but leads to an institutional analysis. In reality, the two cannot be separated because programs ultimately must be considered in the context of the entire institution's mission, priorities, resources and operations. Program changes will have an impact on the museum as a whole and will impinge on institutional priorities. If a self-study recommends a new program, for example, other activities may have to be eliminated if additional funds are not available to support expansion. To prevent structural issues from impeding evaluation, a functional analysis that examines programs in an institutional context is preferable to analyzing departments or divisions in isolation.

A thorough self-study frequently raises management issues. While these usually relate directly to the delivery of programs and services, they may provoke fundamental questions about the effectiveness of a museum's governance and administration, sometimes necessitating reorganization.

## The Self-Study Process

Self-study is a systematic examination of a museum's operations and programs. The process consists of two phases: problem identification and problem solving. First, there is the gathering and analysis of information and the objective examination of both strengths and weaknesses. The sec-



ond phase involves the development of a plan for future action.

To assure a thorough, objective self-study the process should entail a balance of internal staff analysis and external consultant evaluation. The staff always knows the institution best, but if a self-study is restricted to analysis by staff, it can become a narrow exercise. Consultants, on the other hand, draw upon their knowledge of professional practices and programs in other organizations to suggest new ideas and methods. Ideally, self-study should be a collaborative effort; it should never be imposed on a museum by outside consultants.

Most people are threatened by evaluation, particularly if it is conducted by outsiders. Because it makes people accountable for their actions, self-study often provokes a defensive reaction. To minimize this threat, the process must be open and honest. Staff who perceive a hidden agenda will be suspicious of self-study, so the motives must be understood clearly. Lack of information often is much more threatening than the process itself. For the experience to be positive, criticism and conflict must be constructive. Likewise, the self-study should deal with issues, not individuals.

As a form of self-help, self-study may be likened to psychoanalysis. It can be painful and traumatic for the individuals and the institution involved. But problems must be confronted if there is to be progress. In fact, it can be argued that a successful self-study should be difficult, because change is never easy. Museums considering the process must be aware that it is a double-edged sword; it can either bring an institution together or tear it apart. If the problems self-study dramatizes are not handled sensitively and directly, the process can be damaging. But without risk, there is no opportunity to improve.

## Preliminary Planning

Preliminary planning is necessary to prevent misunderstanding, wasted time and costly mistakes. In essence, a pre-self-study should have four elements. The museum director, key administrators or an ad hoc steering committee of selected staff, and possibly trustees, can draw up the blueprint for a self-study and establish the ground rules.

In the first phase of preliminary planning, the museum must decide *why* it wants to do the self-study by identifying specific problems or issues to be solved, defining the scope of the project, articulating the goals and objectives of the self-study and assigning them a priority. The second phase deals with *what* human and financial resources are needed to conduct the self-study. Self-study is time consuming; staff will not be able to devote the usual attention to their regular duties. On the average, self-studies require six to 18 months to complete, depending on the scope and the number of people involved. The amount of funds needed depends on the number of consultants, the extent

of travel, and the use of special methods such as member and audience surveys. The third phase of pre-planning should determine *who* will be involved in the self-study. Finally, it must be decided *how* the self-study will be conducted by identifying the areas where outside assistance is needed, determining the kind of information necessary and establishing the project timetable. At this point, it is advisable to prepare a written statement about the self-study's purpose, scope, goals, resources, methods, timetable, participants and their responsibilities. This statement should be endorsed by the chairman of the board, the director and key administrative staff.

## Participants in a Self-Study

The question of participation is a critical one. The players must be chosen carefully to include those who will make decisions based on the self-study and those who will implement or be affected by its recommendations.

### Trustees

The role and extent of participation by trustees depends on and reflects their role in the museum. But the institution would do well to maintain a distinction between trustees and staff for policy and operational purposes. Some boards may appoint an ad hoc committee to determine the purpose and scope of the self-study as well as to monitor its progress. In this capacity, trustees should advise but not interfere, provide leadership but not censorship. During the course of the project, they should be available to meet with consultants and supply expertise when appropriate.

Since the trustees are legally responsible for the museum and will make policy decisions based on the final recommendations, they must approve the self-study and stay informed of its progress. Failure to do so can lead to unpleasant surprises. Ultimately, it is they who must decide whether to accept or reject the findings.

### Director-Coordinator

There are two schools of thought regarding the role of the museum director. The significance of the study, the sensitivity of the information and the ultimate impact of the findings on the institution lead some people to contend that only the director should be in charge of the self-study. But some directors consciously decide to remain detached, a reasonable choice since the director may be the most vulnerable person during a self-study. If the director is not in charge of the project, he or she must give it full support to ensure cooperation by staff.

Should the project director be someone other than the director, he or she ought to be part of senior management; the deputy or assistant director, for example, has an institution-wide perspective and the authority to supervise staff participation. A lower-level staff member probably



lacks the necessary clout and broad viewpoint. In any case, it is essential that the individual have both personal and professional integrity and competence, knowledge of planning processes, respect of the staff and, most important, sensitivity to people and discretion with confidential information.

Despite the advantage of objectivity, an outside consultant is not recommended as project director because the ultimate responsibility for the self-study and implementation lies with the institution. Moreover, when a self-study is turned over to a consultant, the organization might lose control over the project and staff involvement may be curtailed. Sometimes, however, a project coordinator may be hired to perform logistical functions and serve as a facilitator.

### **Staff**

Since the museum staff must implement the self-study, they should participate substantively in the process by framing its scope, collecting and analyzing data, choosing consultants and responding to their comments, formulating final recommendations and writing the report. Although this participatory process may be longer and costlier, the benefits are worthwhile. If the staff does not participate seriously in the self-study, they will have no commitment to its implementation, and consequently, the study will have little impact on the museum.

An institution-wide task force is one way to achieve staff involvement. A cross-section of the administrative and program staff should be represented, and the committee's focus should be functional rather than departmental.

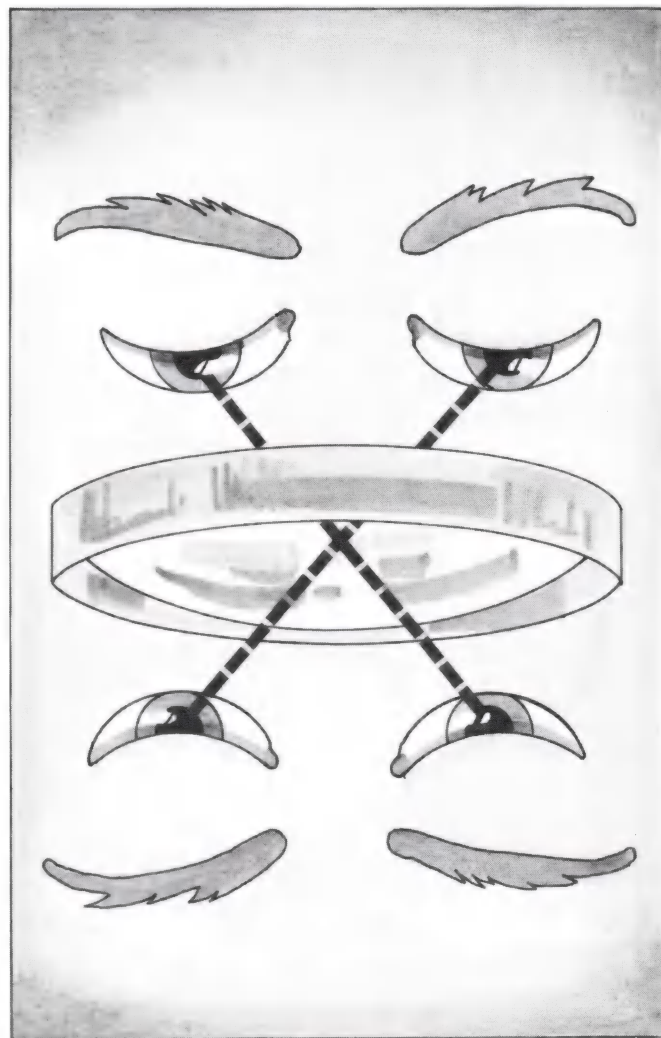
### **Consultants**

A consultant can play many roles in a self-study: catalyst, evaluator, idea person, technical advisor, problem-solver, mediator, systems analyst, researcher and even teacher. Often a consultant serves as a sounding board for staff members. Consultants are always advisors; throughout the project there should be a balanced exchange of ideas between consultants and staff.

Before bringing in consultants — individually or as a team — a museum must determine why they are needed. Typically, consultants do something staff cannot do themselves and provide an outside expert opinion. Consultants should be experienced with the nonprofit sector and cultural institutions, or the value of their advice may be limited.

Short-term consultancies are most common, partly because funds are usually limited. Some institutions prefer longer assignments, however, so the consultant can become more familiar with the organization and make more insightful recommendations.

Choosing the right consultants is critical and requires considerable thought and checking with references. The



consultant must understand the museum and be sympathetic to its mission, although prior knowledge of the institution may not be necessary. Skill at interpersonal relations often is more important than technical expertise. Once a consultant is chosen, a written contract should be prepared stipulating what is expected in terms of the length of the consultancy, the format and timetable for reporting and the fees, as well as clearly stating the consultant's role. Each consultant should be required to submit a written report.

A successful consultation involves a considerable commitment of time by the museum. Prior to the site visit, the consultant should receive copies of key institutional documents and policies, an organizational history and a list of issues or problems to consider. Staff also must be prepared for its role. During the visit, the consultant must have access to all people, including trustees, and all relevant information needed to carry out the assignment.

The use and abuse of consultants in self-studies raises questions of ethics on both sides. Sometimes an institution manipulates consultants to endorse its status quo or



abet a hidden agenda. There should be no attempt to dictate the content of a consultant's report. Similarly, consultants should not be motivated by personal ambition at the expense of the institution or its staff. Once the parameters are defined, the consultant is required to work within that context. Although consultants are obligated to point out areas of weakness, care must be taken not to explode a volatile situation and solutions as well as criticism should be offered. Throughout the assignment, the consultant must use discretion with confidential information while maintaining professional integrity.

## **Public**

Representatives of the public a museum serves may be directly involved in the self-study through an advisory committee created to assist in evaluating existing programs, identifying needed public services and finding ways to promote programs. Groups that can be represented include members, visitors, volunteers, educators, government officials, representatives from foundations, civic and political leaders. By involving these people in the self-study, a museum can lay the groundwork for support of the recommendations.

## **Self-Study Methods**

In conducting a self-study, there is a wide range of methods for gathering and analyzing information from both internal and external sources. The process can start by interviewing trustees, staff and volunteers. Key institutional documents and policies, board minutes, publications, previous consultant reports and planning documents, annual reports and budgets can be used to compile a history of the institution. Staff may visit other museums to observe programs and operations, obtain new ideas and become more aware of accepted professional standards and practices.

Resource planning is a significant self-study method because ideas can be implemented only if they are realistic, given the museum's human, financial and physical resources. Unless there is a price tag attached to recommended programs, there is no way of knowing whether an organization is capable of undertaking them. Financial resource planning may include a feasibility study, a cost-benefit analysis of programs, projections of revenue necessary to support these programs and an analysis of the institution's fund-raising potential.

Long-range planning is a logical part of self-study. Without it, self-study is only an assessment of the status quo and, as such, has limited use for the future. The long-range plan should provide a step-by-step blueprint for reaching goals on a given schedule. In recent years, long-range planning has been superseded by strategic planning, which devises alternative strategies in response to possible external forces beyond the institution's control, such as a declining economy or decreasing museum attendance.

## **Audience Research**

Once internal data is collected, the museum should seek opinions from the public it serves concerning the quality of its programs. One way to obtain this information is by meeting with various segments of the public. It also may be useful to interview legislators and government officials to learn their perceptions of the museum and how well it is serving the public.

By conducting audience research, a museum can learn more about its members and visitors and the effectiveness of its exhibits, programs and services. Beyond yielding demographic data and substantive information for program evaluation, research can help ascertain the museum's public image and determine new areas of need for future program development. In addition to polling its existing audience, a museum should consider surveying a sample of its potential audience or the public at large for purposes of marketing.

Research data are only useful if reliable. Although expert advice can be expensive, it is worthwhile to engage experienced market researchers to plan and conduct audience research. Sometimes graduate students in a university marketing department will carry out such projects for museums. Budget analysts, legislators and foundations are more likely to take the findings seriously if the research is professionally conducted. Done properly, audience research can provide leverage with funding sources, and the data can be used in budget justifications for existing or proposed programs. Moreover, the museum can begin to build a data base for future surveys and evaluations.

## **Reporting the Results**

To have an enduring impact on a museum, the self-study must result in a written report that documents the process and makes recommendations. It should have the following components:

- 1) a discussion of the purpose of the study and a description of the process;
- 2) a brief history or chronology of the institution;
- 3) a statement of the museum's mission;
- 4) a description of the museum's organizational structure, collections, programs and services with an analysis of their strengths and weaknesses;
- 5) an analysis of the museum's financial condition, including an assessment of its funding sources and fund-raising capability;
- 6) a statement of goals and objectives for the institution;
- 7) a set of specific recommendations, in order of priority, for operational changes, new policies and revised or expanded programs;
- 8) a discussion of methods and alternatives for accomplishing goals and implementing recommendations;
- 9) a plan for allocating the necessary human, financial



and physical resources needed to implement the recommendations;

10) a timetable for implementation; and

11) a mechanism for continued assessment of the museum's progress in implementing the self-study recommendations.

Essentially, the report should summarize what the institution is, what it wants to be, and how and when it will get there, given its resources. Often self-study reports establish short-term as well as long-term objectives, since some recommendations can be accomplished almost immediately by reallocating existing resources while others must be postponed until financially feasible.

In some cases, a formal long-range plan is produced as part of the self-study or as a result of it. Multiple-year plans vary from two to 10 years. They probably should not project beyond five years because it is difficult to plan or predict changing external conditions so far in advance. One major exception is a master plan for capital development, which requires an extended timetable to allow for necessary fund raising and construction.

For a self-study report to be well received by the museum's trustees, staff and public, it must represent a consensus and be a synthesis of internal staff analysis and external consultant evaluation. While the report should address the museum's strengths and weaknesses frankly, criticism must be constructive and positive. If the document identifies problems but does not suggest solutions, the report will be negative and perhaps damaging if misused for political purposes.

A self-study report can serve many purposes for a museum. First, it is a management tool. It is a source of data that can be employed in future plans and budgets. It can be used to orient new staff and trustees, particularly if it includes a history of the organization. On another level, the self-study report can be an effective means of educating trustees, government officials and legislators by acquainting them with the institution's mission, programs and needs. In this respect, it can be a political document that sells policymakers on programmatic directions. If it includes a financial plan, the self-study report also can be a budgeting and fund-raising document. Finally, it can be used externally as a public relations device to build public support for the museum and its programs.

Publicizing the findings and recommendations of the self-study may be beneficial to the museum. Some organizations publish their reports, while others consider them internal documents. At the very least, the report should be available to the trustees as well as the staff who participated in the project. Deliberate suppression of a self-study report, particularly within the institution itself, can be destructive if people think the museum has something to hide. One satisfactory alternative is to publish two documents—the comprehensive self-study report for limited distribution and a synopsis of the primary recommenda-

tions for public dissemination. Once the self-study recommendations are publicized, they cannot be ignored. Publicizing the self-study, however, is an excellent signal that the museum cares enough about its programs to evaluate and improve them. In this way, a museum can use its published report to generate public support and funding.

## Continued Evaluation

The self-study report should not be an end in itself but should mark the beginning of a process of continued evaluation. To assure that the recommendations will be implemented, mechanisms for periodic review must be established during the process of the self-study. This can be accomplished by focusing on the means of accomplishing goals, formulating a realistic timetable and creating a built-in method of follow-up evaluation using the self-study as a benchmark.

Plans developed as a result of the self-study should not be static or inflexible. They must be revised regularly to reflect changing conditions if the institution is to be dynamic. While there is no formula for how frequently a plan should be revised, often it is updated annually or biennially, but usually not less than every three to five years.

To ensure that evaluation continues after the self-study is concluded, the process itself can be integrated into the museum's routine management practices such as budgeting, performance appraisal, long-range planning, staff retreats and annual reporting. Periodic audience research can be part of this ongoing process.

There is but one caveat to the principle of continued evaluation and planning. At some point, the institution must get on with implementation. Ultimately, the museum's board must decide whether to accept or reject the self-study recommendations. If the trustees approve the report, they then must endorse the steps necessary for implementation, including appropriation of funds and allocation of other resources.

Learning the process of evaluation is perhaps the most important result of self-study. Once staff members learn how to evaluate programs without fear, self-study becomes a valuable tool for inquiry and problem-solving. Self-study is most productive when the analytical process creates a climate receptive to constructive criticism and encourages people to work together to generate new ideas. When self-study is successful, the institution emerges with a stronger sense of direction and mission among both staff and trustees. There is also a clearer articulation of goals and a greater appreciation of the need for planning. While self-study may never be popular due to its inherent difficulties and risks, it has proven, when used properly, to be a valuable tool for strengthening cultural institutions and making them more competitive for limited resources in today's marketplace. Δ



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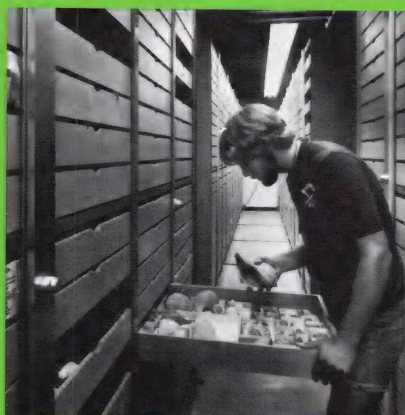
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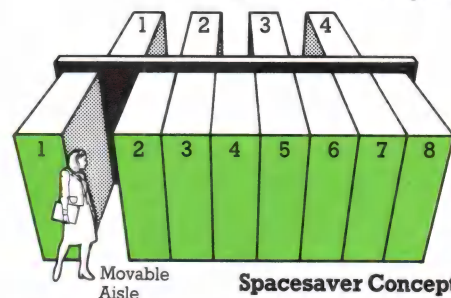


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## Detroit Hosts 80th AAM Meeting

MARIFRED CILELLA



*Philip A. Hart Plaza, with the Renaissance Center towering in the background, is the center of downtown Detroit's convention and outdoor festival activities.*

In 1701, Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac landed on what we know as the Detroit riverfront and established the city of Detroit's center of activity. Today, both pleasure boats and oceangoing freighters still travel this gateway to the Great Lakes.

The Renaissance Center, which houses the Westin Hotel, sits on that same riverfront and will be the site of the American Association of Museums' 80th annual meeting. Delegates will gather at the Westin from June 9-13, 1985, to ponder the issues facing

museums today, share perspectives and exchange information.

More than 100 formal program sessions, numerous committee meetings and several keynote speeches will be offered, covering the usual wide range of topics, including current standards in collections management, finance, the legal and ethical issues confronting museums, and how museums can best serve the public and their communities. Last year's meeting had as its theme, "Museums in Service to America." This year the AAM's newly published report, *Museums for a New Century*, will serve as a touchstone for the program. A rich offering of behind-the-scenes activities

and special events at area museums and cultural institutions will complete the meeting.

As veterans of AAM meetings know well, opportunities to visit and learn about local museums and cultural institutions are an important aspect of annual meeting week. This year is no exception; museums in the Detroit area are planning a series of special events to delight the eye and the mind, as well as the palate. The year 1985 marks the centennial of the Detroit Institute of Arts, the nation's fifth largest art museum, known for its superb collections. To share in the institute's celebration, AAM delegates are invited to a

MARIFRED CILELLA is special activities coordinator at the AAM.



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## IN-HOUSE

progressive dinner evening featuring the DIA, the Detroit Historical Museum, the Detroit Science Center, the Children's Museum and the University Cultural Center. The vast collections and buildings of the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village a few miles away in Dearborn will be the site of afternoon sessions, a dinner and special evening programs, enabling delegates to experi-



*The Detroit Institute of Arts is the nation's fifth largest art museum and the focal point of Detroit's Cultural Center, an impressive grouping of museums, libraries, university and other cultural buildings two miles from downtown.*



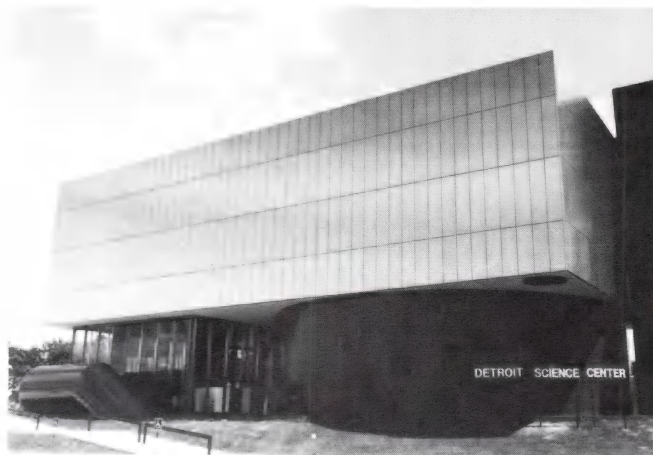
*The Cranbrook Educational and Cultural Center, 20 miles north of Detroit, stretches over 300 acres of wooded grounds. Tour Cranbrook and enjoy the splendor of the Cranbrook House, a 1908 mansion and the gardens (above), which are enhanced by famous fountains and sculptures (right).*





*The vast collections of the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village (right), a few miles away in Dearborn, will be the site of afternoon sessions, a dinner and evening programs.*

*Also a participant in the progressive dinner, the Detroit Historical Museum traces the growth of Detroit from a stockade outpost of the French in America to the present Renaissance City.*



*The Detroit Science Center houses Michigan's only Space Theatre, where a 70mm Omnimax Projector casts a 180-degree image on a domed screen. Delegates will visit the center during the progressive dinner, one of the evening activities offered during the meeting.*

ence Henry Ford's view of life in America from the 17th to the 20th centuries. On a third evening, the world-famous Cranbrook Educational Community will host a picnic on the grounds of its 300-acre wooded estate. Both the Cranbrook Academy of Art and Museum, featuring the works of Cranbrook artists, designers and architects, and the Cranbrook Institute of Science, will open their galleries to delegates. And finally, the Toledo Museum of Art, an important institution only 90 minutes from Detroit, has invited delegates for a special dinner and an opportunity to tour its collections.

In post-conference tours organized by local museums, delegates can head for Michigan's lovely summer vacation areas. There will also be an opportunity to cross the Detroit River bridge into Windsor, Canada, and enjoy the charming restaurants, shops and parks in Ontario's "City of Roses."

The exhibit hall is an increasingly important part of the AAM's annual meetings. Exhibitors are valuable sources of information on exhibit design, storage, conservation, computer software, travel programs, security, display cases, fund raising and much more. This year, the exhibit hall will be the

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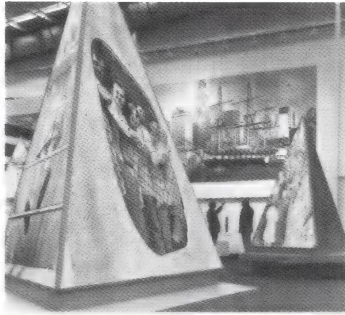
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## IN-HOUSE

hub of meeting activities. Resource centers such as the Traveling Exhibits Service Exchange and the display by the National Association of Museum Exhibition will once again be located there, along with an exhibit of winners from the 1985 Museum Publications Competition. For the first time, the AAM's Museum Assessment Program and Accreditation Commission will provide counseling services in the exhibit hall, as will federal granting agency representatives.

An annual meeting preliminary program with registration information will be available in March. Early registration fees have been set at \$95 for delegates, \$50 for spouses and \$50 for students. After May 3, fees increase to \$135, \$75 and \$65. Day tickets at \$60 for members and \$75 for nonmembers may be pur-

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*Windsor, Ontario—Detroit's charming next-door neighbor, just across the Detroit River. The Detroit-Windsor Tunnel, west of Renaissance Center, or the Ambassador Bridge provide easy access for delegates to lunch in this quaint city.*



*Detroit's antique red and brass trolleys offer delegates a nostalgic and inexpensive (45 cents) trip through the heart of downtown. The trolley runs from Old Mariners' Church to Grand Circus Park and includes on its route many restaurants and shops of particular interest to delegates.*

chased at the meeting only. Delegates must be AAM members or official representatives of member institutions.

The planning committee for the 1985 meeting includes Walter B. Ford II, general chairman, Harold K. Skramstad, Jr.,

program chairman, and Peter W. Stroh, local arrangements chairman. The committee and the staff of Detroit area museums look forward to welcoming delegates to their Motor City for a lively and informative meeting. Δ

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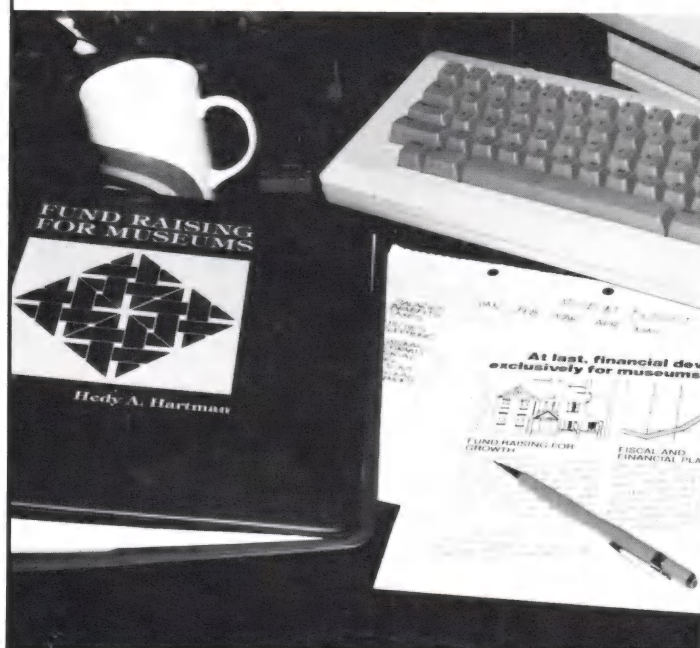
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## Time Machines: The World of Living History

Jay Anderson. Nashville, Tennessee:  
American Association for State and Local  
History, 1984. 217 pp., illus., hardbound,  
\$19.95.

*Reviewed by Cary Carson*

**I**knew I was saving my eyeteeth for something. I'd have given them both to have written *Time Machines: The World of Living History* by Jay Anderson. Historians seldom have cause or occasion to write about their work with the enthusiasm, intelligence, humor, style and affection that infuse this book about interpreters, experimenters and reenactors of "living history" who are demonstrating every day their power to put a vast general public in touch with the past.

This is the first book to examine comprehensively a significant movement in the history field and a remarkable phenomenon in public education. Living history is Anderson's umbrella term for a menagerie of programs and activities that got separate and unrelated starts with organizations and events as different as the National Park Service, the Association for Living Historical Farms and Agricultural Museums, the highly publicized *Kon-Tiki* and *Ra* voyages of Thor Heyerdahl, the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association and the (deliciously named) Society for Creative Anachronism. Each invented "time machines" to help people reenter the past vicariously and to stimulate life there for shorter or longer periods of time. For many years these activities failed to attract more than an occasional sideways sneer from professional historians. The antics of costumed museum interpreters and self-appointed weekend warriors often deserved the scorn that was implied by an early, playful title for Anderson's book — *Into the Time Warp With History's Lunatic Fringe* — which he wisely rejected. Wisely because in



*At Plimoth Plantation in Plymouth, Massachusetts, a Pilgrim housewife begins a joyous ritual: beer-making. For visitors, the aroma of malt and hops is didactic stimulation. From Time Machines: The World of Living History, by Jay Anderson.*

recent years both academic and museum-working historians have found serious educational and scientific uses for "animated history." At the same time, the buffs have become earnest students of the periods and personae they portray and unforgiving sticklers for accuracy and authenticity. Increasingly, amateurs and professionals share a common cause. A discipline is forming, one with its own brand-new quarterly publication, *Living History Magazine*, and now this book issued and blessed by the papacy of historical organizations in this country, the American Association for State and Local History.

Jay Anderson is a perfect high priest and law-giver to this youthful discipline. His own career — which began when he was scarcely 10 — spans the whole modern history of the movement. Indeed, he himself has been a leading participant in many of the events he describes. His own personal experience and his acquaintance with other pioneering time travelers in this

country and abroad provide not only the framework for the book, but give his writing a vitality usually reserved for oral histories.

Eighteen chapters are collected into three parts. The first (the one that readers of *MUSEUM NEWS* will find most pertinent to their own work) examines the institutionalized memory machines, the living history museums. A second section deals with living history as a research technique, and a concluding set of chapters describes its recreational uses, "doin' the time warp" as the buffs and buckskinners say. Anderson has impeccable credentials in all three callings. Co-founder and director of Colonial Pennsylvania Plantation during the Bicentennial, he later became chief of research, interpretation and collections at Living History Farms in Des Moines, Iowa. There and at Plimoth Plantation he and fellow "experimental archeologists" were engaged from time to time in simulating agricultural and domestic activities to study aspects of everyday life too commonplace to receive mention in written records of the period. That much was work, Mondays through Fridays. Weekends he spent playing Confederate soldier or backwoodsman with the likes of the American Living History Association or the American Mountain Men. As a consequence of his personal involvement in the whole "world of living history," all three sections of the book that bears that subtitle ring true with the authenticity of an insider's eyewitness account.

The author's formal training in history and folklore shows to good advantage in the way he organizes the story he tells. Each section starts with a background chapter or two that brings the history of open-air museums, "imitative experiments" and reenactment groups up to the beginning of the modern age in the living history movement, generally the 1960s and early 1970s. Here for the first time is a historical account of organizations, groups and free spirits too marginal or too low-brow to have gained admission to Charles Hosmer's eminently respectable his-

CARY CARSON is director of research at Colonial Williamsburg.



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## BOOKS

tory of the American preservation movement, *Presence of the Past*. But undeniably they too deserve a telling in the complete preservation narrative. *Time Machines*, therefore, makes its first contribution as an intellectual history of a popular mania for dramatic arts used to portray and thereby recall, study and ultimately preserve what we in this generation choose to remember about the lives of ordinary men and women in the past, be they Stone Age farmers or the Willies and Joes of World War II.

The central chapters in each section — the heart of the book — take their inspiration from Anderson the folklorist and (currently) professor in the folklore and historic preservation program at Western Kentucky University. They read like little ethnographies, concise descriptive accounts of museums, festivals, rendezvous, voyages and bivouacs written by a trained observer using the patois of his informants. The author's colorful, easy writing style is actually a very successful method of recording the colloquial genius of a "Poor Devil" Newman or a "Cripple Creek" Grissom or, on the other hand, the scientific precision of one of the pioneering experimenters with whom Anderson has talked and sometimes worked. The footnotes in these chapters cite scores of personal interviews. Likewise the book's many black-and-white illustrations candidly record events and episodes that, once performed, would otherwise have passed unrecorded into living history legend. So Anderson performs a second service by presenting the centerpiece of his book as a string of oral histories, a permanent record in words and photographs of actors and activities that have shaped the living history movement.

The footnotes and picture captions also serve as bibliography and gazetteer for readers who want to sample time traveling for themselves by visiting outdoor history museums or attending living history reenactments. They should also consult the appendix of "Sources and Resources" where the author has anticipated the interest his book will excite and no doubt has averted an av-



## Which man weighs 35 pounds?\*

\*The figure of Robert Dorfman (seated at left) was created by Robert Dorfman (standing).

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alanche of correspondence by providing a select, annotated list of living history museums, books and articles on the subject, trade magazines and journals, living history organizations, and the names and addresses of sutlers; that is, outfitters to those who want to dress the part. *Time Machines* is therefore, in addition to everything else, a helpful primer for students and a handy companion for vacation travelers.

Best of all, this is also a book of philosophy. On reflection I think it must be my wisdom teeth, not my incisors, that I would gladly relinquish to have written the thoughtful concluding chapters to each section and an epilogue entitled "Computer Days and Digital Nights." Ours is a field of education that seldom displays the courage or the wits to ask "why" or "so what." Anderson is a smarter cookie than most. He knows that any serious ambitions he entertains to see living history "take root and grow into a mature tradition" must rest on a carefully examined pedagogy.

The dream of living historians, he explains, is to throw off the bonds of present time and break through into the

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## BOOKS

past. It is, he concedes, an impossible dream, but he goes on to argue that the illusion is liberating. It helps time travelers overcome their temporal ethnocentrism and empathize with ordinary people in the past. "In a world mired in prejudice," he reasons, "time travel is an ethical act. An understanding, appreciation and tolerance for our forebears may help us improve relationships with our foreign brothers and sisters in the here and now."

No one could want to disparage such a noble aspiration, but there will be skeptics who can turn Anderson's own words into reasons aplenty to question whether the living history medium really can achieve cross-cultural comparisons. Anderson can handle the conventional critics who pooh-pooh time traveling because it ignores the standard

rules of evidence observed by written-record historians. The way he sees it, empathy is as important as rational understanding; "felt-truth" is as sure a guide to the past as truths that can be footnoted and looked up in books and manuscripts. Evidence of any kind can always be abused, and living historians are culpable, but, as the section on simulation as a research tool amply demonstrates, skilled and conscientious experimenters with the past have developed a set of rules to avoid the worst dangers of subjectivity. Many historians who are honest with themselves will acknowledge that the ability to empathize with people in the past is a skill we all employ to some degree in exercising our historical imaginations. If there are those who need to put on soldiers' uniforms or risk their lives in leaky boats to get in touch with the past, who are we to cry "screwballs"?

I have more trouble believing that genuine insights into other cultures will come from living historians who exhibit two other distinguishing traits that Anderson believes makes them

"absolutely right for our times." Such people, his book amply testifies, are presbyterian in the extreme. The movement thrives on independence. "Each museum, each project, each unit" — for that matter, each individual — "makes its own covenant with historical truth and determines the way it will carry on its dialogue with the past." Absolute intellectual freedom sounds fine until we learn that the privilege is enjoyed by historical interpreters who characteristically also believe that "before you can study the forest, you must become totally familiar with the trees." In fact, time travelers talk a lot about the "texture" of life in the historical periods they visit, and, when they come home to the present, they spend a lot of time acquiring "the right stuff," by which they mean authentic 1862 Union Army canteens or mid-18th-century petticoats with 20", not 10", side hoops.

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mostly inhabit the present. Short of that, re-creating authentic historical appearances for their own sake is mere antiquarianism dressed up in old-fashioned clothes. So long as independent, empathetic living historians disavow a duty "to discern a grand pattern of relationships" while indulging an inalienable, personal preference "to steep themselves in the historical context of a particular place and time," I fear Anderson's hopes will be cheated. History teaching that tries to reach beyond the teacher's own personal experience to educate larger audiences of students or museum visitors has an unavoidable obligation to show relationships, reveal grand patterns and make worthwhile connections with the present. That means curtailing some of the living historians' precious independence. It means harnessing their activities and interpretations to a museum's educational master plan. It means knowing much more than this book tells us about the actual learning process that takes place when a nonparticipating bystander watches a living historian re-

create a character and reenact episodes from his or her life.

To explain all that will take another book as good as this one. Maybe I'm glad after all that my dental work is still intact.

### Art Law in a Nutshell

Leonard D. DuBoff. St. Paul, Minnesota: West Publishing Co., 1984. 335 pp., paperbound, \$11.95.

*Reviewed by Catherine A. Bostrom*

**A**rt Law in a Nutshell provides a thoroughly readable and skillful introduction to legal issues that arise in the arts. The compact volume, endorsed in an introduction by Livingston Biddle, former chairman of

CATHERINE A. BOSTROM is assistant general attorney for American Broadcasting Companies and a member of the Committee on Art Law of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York.

the National Endowment for the Arts, is devoted primarily to the arts that are both visual art and "fine" art. Related areas such as crafts, archeology and historic preservation are touched on briefly. By covering a wide range of topics — from auctions, authentication of art and customs laws to tax issues, copyright and the first amendment — in a format that is accessible to the lawyer and non-lawyer alike, *Art Law in a Nutshell* represents a significant contribution to the field. Through this book author Leonard D. DuBoff, a professor of the law at Lewis & Clark College's Northwestern School of Law and one of the leading authorities on art law, is likely to reach new audiences to whom the subject matter is of great, and growing, concern.

Although museum personnel represent a portion of that audience, *Art Law* is directed toward artists and private art collectors (and their lawyers) as much as art curators and museum administrators. The reader will thus find that *Art Law* does not cover many issues of unique concern to art museums and also does not emphasize the museum's

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## BOOKS

perspective on relevant issues that are discussed. ALI-ABA's annual seminar on legal aspects of museum administration and operation and the AAM's presentations of legal developments at its annual meetings are more successfully directed to those ends.

Yet *Art Law in a Nutshell* is extremely useful reading for art museum professionals and trustees. The book explains basic concepts of several laws with which museums are directly confronted, including international transport of art, copyright, insurance, authentication and artists' moral rights. *Art Law* is also valuable to anyone who wants to gain a general knowledge of

and familiarity with legal issues relating to the arts. Such a familiarity would provide a basis for understanding actions taken by collectors, museums and artists that are motivated by legal considerations, for recognizing potential legal problems and emerging legal issues in the arts, and for analyzing the sometimes controversial incidents in the arts in which law plays a critical role. Recent examples of the latter include Sotheby's auction of Hebrew books previously owned by a German rabbinical seminary and the allegedly illegal exportation from France of a Poussin painting that was purchased by the Cleveland Museum of Art.

*Art Law* is approachable and easy to read, not only because it is well-written and printed in large and clear type, but also because each chapter is self-contained and covers a discrete topic. In addition, the book is not all law but presents a good mixture of the policy and the history (including amusing anecdotes and provocative occurrences), as well as the law, of many issues. The

chapters on "Aid to the Arts" and "Art: The Victim of War," for example, reflect this mix. The non-lawyer should be warned, however, that portions of several chapters (e.g., those on taxes and warranties) contain rather technical discussions of the law. Although *Art Law* is more accessible to the layman than most law books, readers who have no familiarity with the law may fail to fully fathom some concepts and terminology as well as the implications of the court decisions described throughout the book.

The chapters of *Art Law* covering topics that are most relevant to museum personnel are among the best parts of the book. "Art: The Customs Definition," contains material on the historical development and the current problems of the definition of "art" for customs purposes. The distinction between art and non-art is significant since no customs duty is payable when an object entering the United States is classified as art. DuBoff describes the law's struggle to expand the definition

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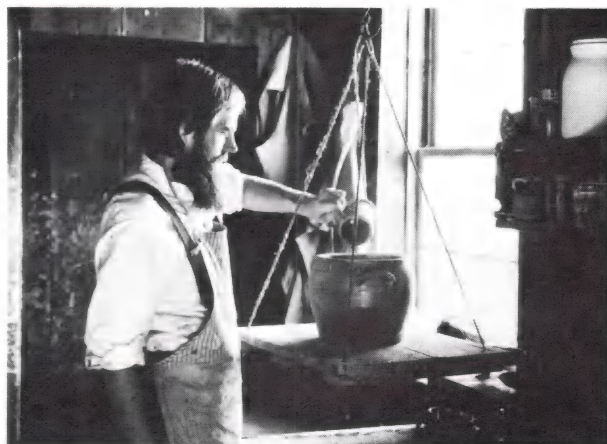
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## BOOKS

of art to include abstract as well as representational art (Brancusi's abstract sculpture *Bird in Flight* became the subject of a 1928 court case after customs officials determined the sculpture was a "manufacture of metal" instead of a work of art) and to draw distinctions between artists, who create "art" for customs purposes, and artisans, whose products are subject to customs duties. The chapter on "Art: International Movement," presents the background and rationale of restrictions on the international movement of art. Professor DuBoff describes the export laws of several countries and provides a basis for their evaluation.

A later chapter, "Authentication," contains an excellent discussion of the legal issues involved in the authentica-

tion of art works by experts, including an expert's legal liability for a careless or wrongful attribution. Remedies available to the purchaser of a counterfeit or misattributed work are also presented. The section of the chapter on warranties is particularly comprehensive and valuable.

Other good chapters include those on insurance, the moral and economic rights of artists, and copyright, although the latter chapter could have benefited from a more thorough discussion of the important doctrine of "work made for hire." The two chapters on tax laws, "Tax Problems: Collectors and Dealers" and "Tax Problems: Artists," provide insights into tax considerations influencing collectors, dealers and artists, and include an explanation of art tax shelters.

The final chapter on museums treats issues of tax exemption, unrelated business taxable income, trustee and director liability, acquisitions and deaccessions, and labor relations, all topics of which museum personnel are already likely to have a basic knowledge.

A few sections of the book are, alas,



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already out of date — an affirmation of the growth in the area of art law and the need for interested persons to keep up with developments, or to catch up as soon as possible.

Despite the limitations in the size of *Art Law*, which contains 298 pages of text but whose pages are truly of "nutshell" proportion, Duboff devotes attention to a remarkable array of topics. He manages to leave a memorable impression of issues and, at various points, to interject personal viewpoints or recommend a practical course of behavior.

The limited size of *Art Law in a Nutshell* necessarily entails some shortfalls. A few presentations (such as portions of the chapters on "Art as an Investment" and "The Working Artist") may appear simplistic or cursory, especially to the reader who is experienced or well-versed in the topic. The brevity of the book also reduces its value as a reference tool. For an extensive treatment of art law or a volume containing useful model contracts, other legal documents and primary source materials, one should consult the massive treatises on the subject: DuBoff's own *The Desk-*

*book of Art Law* (originally published in 1977 and updated by a 1984 supplement) or Franklin Feldman and Stephen E. Weil's forthcoming new edition of *Art Works: Law, Policy, Practice*. Since there are more comprehensive articles and books on nearly every subject discussed in *Art Law in a Nutshell*, a bibliography of further readings would have greatly enhanced the usefulness of the book.

*Art Law*, incidentally, is one in a series of about 100 "nutshell" books published by legal publisher West Publishing Co., the titles of which range from *International Business Transactions* to *Welfare Law*. The series is frequently consulted by law students seeking to learn the basic principles of a subject prior to an examination and by practicing lawyers who desire a relatively painless, general and quick introduction to an unfamiliar area of the law. *Art Law in a Nutshell* lives up to the standards that characterize the nutshell series: it offers enjoyable general reading material while imparting a fundamental understanding of and introduction to important issues in the field of art law.

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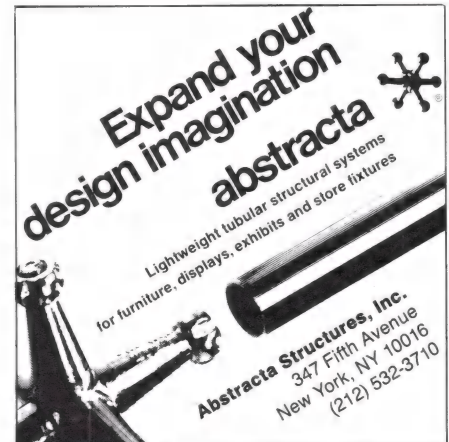
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## BOOKS

### **Enterprise in the Nonprofit Sector**

James C. Crimmins and Mary Keil.  
Washington, D.C.: Partners for Livable Places and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, 1983. 141 pp., paperbound, \$7.

*Reviewed by Theodore Z. Penn*

**E**nterprise in the Nonprofit Sector is intriguing in that it focuses on a subject of great importance for those concerned with the revenue side of nonprofit operations. It is also a provocative book as it engages an aspect of nonprofit management that is without controversy.

By "enterprise in the nonprofit sector," Crimmins and Keil mean "those income-producing activities that are beyond the normal mission of an institution." According to this definition, admission fees and tuition are not considered to be enterprise-generated revenue. The authors also point out that enterprise can be directed toward cost reduction as well as revenue expansion. Enterprise, then, constitutes those income-producing or expense-reducing activities that lie somewhere outside of normal operations but which are still allowed by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as "related business ventures."

The book is a report on an original research project undertaken by the authors. Their primary interest is in tax-exempt, 501(c)3 organizations. Crimmins and Keil sent out some 1800 questionnaires to a carefully selected sample of cultural and social service organizations. The response rate was much less than anticipated by the authors; fewer than 10 percent of the surveys were returned. Perhaps so few questionnaires came back because they were phrased in such a way that only those organizations with positive enterprise experience tended to respond. The

THEODORE Z. PENN is director of the Commonwealth Museum in Boston, Massachusetts.

examples cited in the text certainly emphasize success. The survey instrument is not included among the appendixes so the reader is not able to judge for himself or herself if any bias is present in the questions.

Crimmins and Keil do a very credible job of exploring and illuminating the advantages and disadvantages of supporting or supplementing programs with income earned through enterprise. Their book offers useful suggestions to anyone interested in pursuing enterprise in a nonprofit setting. They recommend strongly, for example, that those organizations initiating enterprise ventures consult first with the IRS to insure that their plans will be allowed. The authors mention but do not elaborate upon the creation of a for-profit corporate partner whose revenues would be returned to support nonprofit operations. Once taxes are paid, enterprise need not be confined to "related business ventures." Above all, Crimmins and Keil encourage managers of nonprofit organizations to study and learn the relevant tax laws, whether they are contemplating the pursuit of enterprise or not.

*Enterprise* is organized around six chapters. The fourth, "Organizational Self-Evaluation," serves as a useful checklist to guide the prospective entrepreneur. It asks the question, "Should your organization be involved in enterprise?" and encourages the reader to think about maximizing the return from every available asset. The heart of the book, however, is in the 11 examples of nonprofit enterprise that comprise the second chapter. Crimmins and Keil label these 11 examples "case studies." A more appropriate name for them would be "profiles," as the authors call them in the introduction, for they do not seem to be based on the sort of rigor-

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ous analysis that is customarily associated with case studies. Instead, the profiles appear to be constructed almost exclusively on the testimony of the individuals who are directly responsible for the ventures described within them.

Only one of the profiles involves a museum. In that example, the actions initiated by Richard Steckel to bring the Denver Children's Museum (DCM) back from "deep financial trouble" are described in five short pages. Within seven years, Steckel was able to build a \$650,000 annual budget to support his operation, 95 percent of which was "earned income."

The keys to Steckel's success were "solid financial management and marketing techniques." In addition to improved business methods, he also brought a new attitude to the DCM based upon a "strategy of self-sufficiency." Under Steckel's direction, the museum ceased to search for "donations" and began to look for "partners in ventures that deal with learning tools for kids."

Management, outreach, sales, and entertaining and innovative program-

ming all played a part in the DCM's turnaround. Steckel recognized that one of the reasons his staff was able to "operate innovatively," however, was because the museum was not "bound by long-established traditions." The organization did not have many of the scholarly and collections-based responsibilities that are very real obligations in many museums.

The intention of the authors is to stimulate enterprise through the demonstration of success. In their own words, they call their book "a blueprint, a document with which individuals and institutions can build enterprise opportunities." Perhaps this approach makes enterprise seem a little too simple. Successful entrepreneurial ventures are extremely difficult to create and manage—especially as a part of museums. This reviewer would prefer a more balanced, more realistic appraisal of enterprise in which the disadvantages and failures are integrated with the advantages and successes. Comparison and contrast can be an extremely effective instructional technique. It may be that space limitations forced the authors to write pro-

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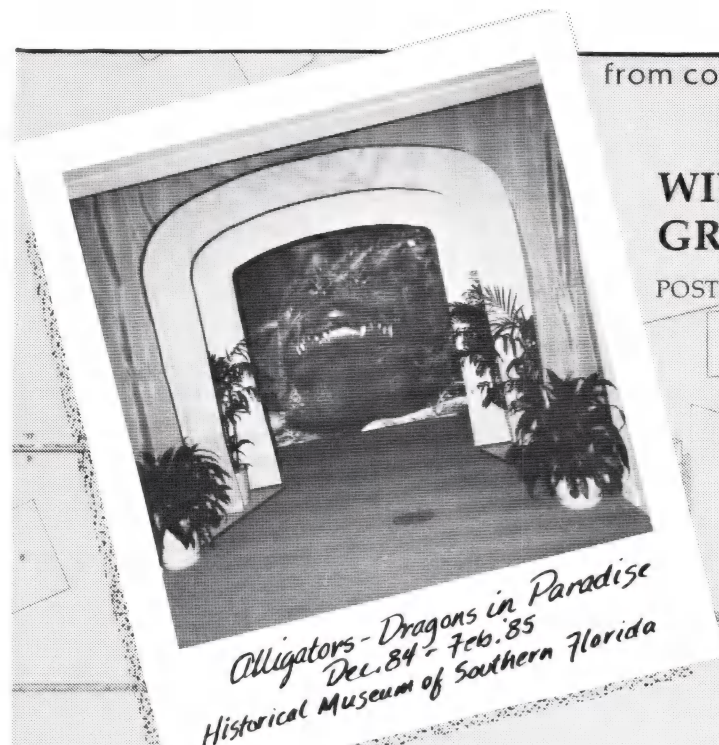
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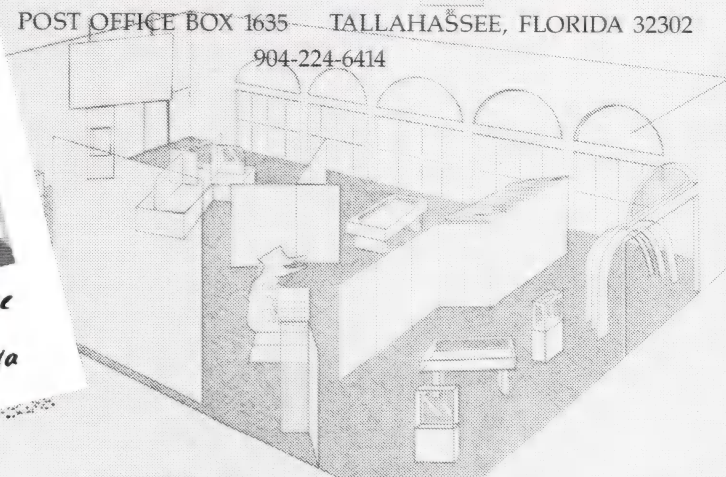
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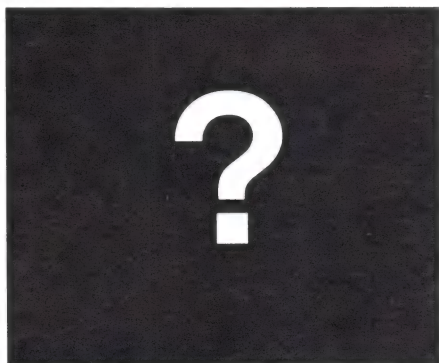


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files of limited length and restricted point of view. The entire book focuses on the profiles, however, and if they had been expanded to include different perspectives and balanced analysis, a more useful book would have been the result.

Crimmins and Keil state that one way to make enterprise work in a nonprofit setting is to create a position called "Director of Enterprise." This position, they say, should be filled by someone brought in from the world of for-profits who has demonstrated ability as an entrepreneur. In the ideal organization, say the authors, this individual, along with the directors of "program," "development" and "administration," would report to the chief executive officer. This creates a structure, it can be argued, that tends to favor financial concerns over program

concerns. In the modern world of museums, the balance between scholarship and commercialism is often precarious. It can be extremely difficult to maintain that balance with a management group that is so heavily tilted toward the business side of operations.

Museums cannot solve all their problems by bringing in business-trained outsiders. Certainly businessmen and businesswomen possess a set of skills from which museums can benefit but, just as certainly, as they apply their special knowledge to resolve one set of problems they often unwittingly create other difficulties. Entrepreneurial skills are as hard to find in the private sector as they are in the world of nonprofits. And, when they are introduced into nonprofits, as the authors admit, they are not always appropriate. Crimmins and Keil have made a valuable contribution to the field of nonprofit management with *Enterprise*. Much work remains to be done. Enterprise, however, is only one of the skills that museum professionals must learn and integrate into their own work if their organizations are to continue to grow and prosper. ▲

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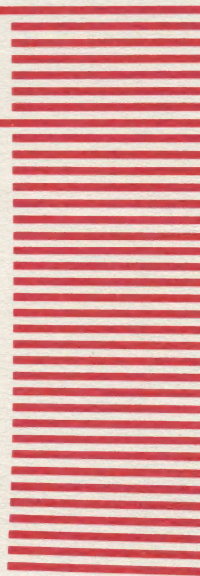
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